

JAN. 11, 1851.]

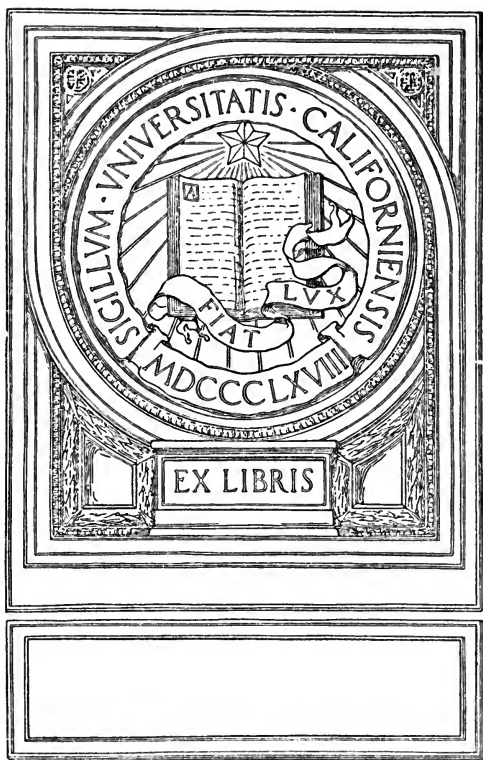
### MR. JOHN PARRY.

On Tuesday evening Mr. John Parry repeated his "Notes, Vocal and Instrumental," at the Store-street Rooms, to a crowded audience. The various imitations and musical conceits in this entertainment are truly amazing; and the performer's powers of description by means of the pianoforte are unbounded. Amongst the most striking features are his excellent impersonation of a Welsh girl, in which he sings a Welsh song with remarkable success; and of a music-master and his grand opera of "Douglas," with an overpowering "crescendo chorus," and the pastoral ballad of "My Name is Norval;" his imitations of amateur vocalists, and young lady pianists; his clever impersonation of an Artist, with an instantaneous change of costume (*See the Illustration*); a visit to the Park, with drums and fifes, and the march of soldiers imitated by rattling the keys; a visit to Astley's, and the "rapid act of horsemanship;" the bear's *running* accompaniment on the wires of his den at



MR. JOHN PARRY—THE ARTIST.

the Zoological Gardens; and a host of other pleasantries. This entertainment is very superior to the first.



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*Mr. Kenbury & Jack Johnson given a "Soirée dansante."*

*John Rury. Esq.  
with kindest regards of his sincere friend  
the Author.  
1843.*

THE

ADVENTURES OF MR. LEDBURY

AND

HIS FRIEND JACK JOHNSON.

By ALBERT SMITH, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "THE WASSAIL BOWL," ETC. ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

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1844.

TO THE  
AUTHOR

LONDON:  
Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY, WILSON, and FLEY,  
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

TO  
JAMES A. HALLETT, ESQ.

THESE VOLUMES ARE

INSCRIBED

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF

ESTEEM AND FRIENDSHIP.

M92564



## PREFACE.

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THE system of writing a tale in periodical divisions, wherein one situation must follow upon the heels of another with high-pressure rapidity—in which constant change is looked for, and no repose allowed between the prominent incidents of the narrative—is not the best calculated to form a three-volume novel. And therefore the Author has made some slight alterations in this story, from its original form in “Bentley’s Miscellany,” in order that the structure might be better adapted for republication.

He has endeavoured, in Mr. Ledbury’s Adventures, to sketch the manners of certain classes of society, as they actually are—not as they are conventionally represented to be; and as they are taken from nature, not individually, but generally, he hopes they will be considered, at least, faithful. If they are thought, in some instances, superficial, or deficient in deep knowledge of human nature, he would only beg his readers to regard the portrayal of his characters as they would the face of a clock; the chief object of which being to convey certain intelligence, provided it does so honestly, the great

part of the world cares little by what hidden springs or wheels such a result is produced, beyond the general principles of its action. And possibly it is a more pleasant thing to look upon each variation of the world's kaleidoscope as an agreeable *ensemble*—to be content and pleased with it as we find it—rather than pull it to pieces for the sole purpose of showing how comparatively dull and worthless are its constituent atoms.

The Author cannot conclude this brief Preface without expressing himself well aware of the advantages his story has derived from the excellent illustrations which accompany it. When we read an illustrated work, it is sometimes difficult to tell whether the pen or the pencil can claim the greater share in forming our ideas of the characters ; but he can only say, in this instance, that had he possessed the power of embodying his own notions of Mr. Ledbury's various associates in a picture, he could not have put them down more exactly than has been done by Mr. LEECH, to whose suggestions and perceptive humour the Author has been more than once indebted.

London, December, 1843.



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THE  
ADVENTURES OF MR. LEDBURY,

AND HIS FRIEND

JACK JOHNSON.

---

CHAPTER I.

WHICH INTRODUCES THE HEROES TO THE READER.

MR. LEDBURY was a pale young gentleman of four-and-twenty, residing at Islington, having short light curly hair, a very smooth face, and no whiskers ; being short-sighted, and standing about five feet eleven in his improved Albert-boots, ("gent's new style,") and one inch less in his pumps. He inclined to ginger-beer, tea, cider, and other harmless beverages that suited his mild idiosyncrasy ; he rose early, took long walks on fine afternoons to Hampstead, and other suburban ruralities ; played the flute a little ; subscribed to a knowledge-diffusing periodical ; called Harley "a very humorous performer ;" and thought Mrs. Nesbitt a "very fascinating actress." Perhaps our readers will now recognise him ; indeed, we think some of them have met him before.

The season was over, and all Mr. Ledbury's friends—for he had a very large connexion—were leaving town. The Simpsons had started, *per* Batavier, for Langen Schwalbach; his own family were located at Herne Bay; the Grimleys had been heard of in Brittany; the Smiths had gone to Margate; and the Smythes to Naples;—indeed, all were off to spend money, to retrench, to court publicity, or to be out of the way. Mr. Ledbury himself had dreamt of Gravesend and a cheap lodging near Windmill Hill; having suffered from a mild attack of the epidemic which seizes all our compatriots at this period, and produces the results of their experiences, during the next publishing season, under the titles of “A Summer amongst the Boarding-houses and the Shrimps,” “The Idler in Worthing,” “A Ride on a Donkey to Pegwell Bay, by a Lady,” “Rottingdean,—its Manufactures and Political Resources,” and many others of the same class. But where to go? was now the question, and rather difficult it was to answer,—not because he was *blasé* with having travelled everywhere, but simply because he had never been anywhere. But chance at last determined him to the great undertaking we are about to chronicle.

Had Mr. Ledbury been a young man of fortune, he would have dined at a club whilst his family were out of town: as he was not, he

chose an eating-house ; for being, in common with man in general, naturally gregarious, he loved to feed in flocks ; and there was a *restaurant* which he frequented in a street near the West End ; for the sake of the walk, and because it touched on the limits of fashion. From one o'clock daily until six, joints of tempting richness smoked in the windows ; indeed, the very odour that stole out into the streets seemed to possess peculiarly nourishing powers, to judge from the hungry crowd that surrounded the premises. In the morning, the appearance of the eating-house was not so tempting as at a more advanced period of the day. Strange cold meats, of unintelligible origin and extraordinary shape, were exposed to view, with the remnants of yesterday's bill of fare on small plates. Round tough puddings, studded with plums at uncertain intervals, reposed with an air of indigestible solidity upon white and greasy earthenware dishes ; and the soup-tureens were filled with a singular coagulation, resembling small pieces of fat and carrots set in dirty glue. But towards afternoon the scene was changed ; the cold joints had all departed, — we believe it was never known where, — steaming legs and rounds supplied their places, and a portion of the window was partitioned off for the reception of verdant-looking mustard and cress, ornamented with rings of beet-root and sticks of celery in tasteful combination.

Mr. Ledbury was of an inquiring turn of mind. He belonged to a Literary and Scientific Institution in the neighbourhood, and, by attending all the lectures thereat delivered with unremitting regularity, had acquired that happy jumble of the various branches of Natural Philosophy which such a practice generally induces. Hence there was one circumstance in this eating-house which constantly exercised his reflective powers: the joints in the window were always hot and smoking. He never could imagine by what secret acquaintance with the power of controlling the radiation of caloric (as he termed it) this advantage was gained; nothing short of the skill of Herr Dobler or the Wizard of the North could accomplish it. The joints not only sent up a light vapour, as hot joints generally do, but they were encompassed in a perfect cloud of steam, which, besides rising like incense when they were first placed in the oval pewter hollows formed in the window for their reception, kept on smoking all day until they were cut down to the bone; and then the bone itself steamed away just as comfortably as if it still had its full complement of meat. Nay, when the bone itself had disappeared, the vapour ascended just the same from the spot it had occupied, as furiously as from the plum-puddings of gigantic dimensions, whilom used in pantomimic banquets, to the great admiration of the little boys in dilapidated envelopes



who clustered round the window, and pointed out to each other what they should like to have.

There was a gentleman of a very vivacious turn of mind, who constantly dined at this eating-house, at the same table, and about the same hour that Mr. Ledbury visited it. He was commonly known as "Jack Johnson,"—no one ever presuming to add "*Mr.*" to the appellation; and he was just the sort of person you would imagine an everybody's Jack Johnson to be. He could play singlestick, make punch, slang coal-heavers, drive hack-cabs, and sing comic songs, better than anybody else in London. There was not a night-tavern at which he was not as well known as the head-waiter or the glee-singing chairman. He could always get orders for any of the theatres. He was seen one night at an evening party in Bryanstone Square, and the next at a shilling ball at the Lowther Rooms; at one time he might be spied out in the gallery at Covent Garden, and at another in the stage-box; on Monday, eating *Beignets des Pêches* at Very's; on Wednesday, discussing haricot mutton at Berthollini's; and on Friday dining from alamode beef in Holborn,—and all with the same relish. In fact, he was one of those extraordinary conglomerations of antithetical attributes constantly turning up in the great world, like the water-rockets at the Surrey Zoological Gardens,—sparkling about for a space of time in extreme

brilliancy, anon disappearing for an equal period from all observation, and then coming up again at a place where they were never expected, and flourishing about as lively and eccentric as ever.

Mr. Ledbury was on terms of intimate acquaintance with Jack Johnson, although the two were as different in their dispositions as a bottle of champagne and a tin of Devonshire cream ; and they always enjoyed a little conversation when they met, Mr. Ledbury usually commencing by a few mild meteorological observations, which Jack Johnson generally replied to by asking his opinion of things in general, and the Romans in particular,—questions, it must certainly be admitted, involving much theory and ingenious speculation.

“ It ’s very hot,” observed Mr. Ledbury, one warm day towards the end of August, as he seated himself at the accustomed table.

“ Uncommonly,” said Johnson, “ and so is this cold meat—I mean to cut it soon. Where do you think of going ?”

“ I had an idea of visiting Gravesend,” gently replied Ledbury.

“ Ugh !” said Mr. Johnson, expressing disgust, “ don’t go there. Nasty place—swarms with hot clerks—bad bathing, too—neither fresh nor salt, but a dash of both.”

“ But they say the living is cheap there.”

“ Oh ! nonsense !” was the reply. “ You get overdone with shrimps—nothing else to be

had at times, upon my honour. Shrimps for breakfast, dinner, and tea — potted shrimps, shrimp-puddings, shrimp-soup—the very pastry-cooks make their tarts of shrimp-jam, and think nothing so fine as shrimp-ices.”

“How very odd!” observed Mr. Ledbury. “I never heard that before.”

“Fact, sir!” continued Jack. “Why don’t you go to France? I’m going, and anywhere else chance may take me. Suppose you come too.”

Mr. Ledbury was a little aghast—the thoughts of a continental tour had never entered his head in his wildest dreams of travel. He inquired—

“Will it not be very expensive?”

“Oh, no,” answered Jack. “I know Paris very well. Things are as cheap as dirt there, if you know where to buy them. Velvet hats sixpence a-piece; kid gloves four sous (that’s two-pence); and glazed boots half-a-crown a pair; lodgings five shillings a-month.”

“That certainly is very reasonable,” said Mr. Ledbury. “I should think, though, that the lodgings are not very great things at that rate.”

“They are very comfortable, though,” answered Jack. “They let you keep dogs in them, and rabbits, and—in fact, anything you like.”

“I have read about Paris in the guide-books.”

“Ah! I should think so. Guide-books are collections of lies half-bound in cloth, to deceive travellers. You never find much in them to be

of service. Take Mrs. Starke with you, follow her directions, and see where they will lead you—that 's all."

Mr. Ledbury not having a very clear idea as to who Mrs. Starke was, relapsed into silence.

"Paris is a perpetual holiday," continued Mr. Johnson; "a large tub of fun always running over."

"But I don't know the language very well."

"Oh! you 'll learn it quickly. Go to the balls, and dance with the *grisettes*: they 'll teach you soon enough."

"What's a *grisette*?" inquired Ledbury.

"Oh! nice! I believe you," replied Johnson, winking his eye, and finishing his pint of stout. "A *grisette* is a French translation of a Pantheon stall-girl, with a dash of the milliner, and an occasional sprinkling of the washerwoman and Cranbourne Alley bonnet-seller."

"What a singular mixture! How I should like to see one!"

Mr. Ledbury's curiosity was evidently excited; and Jack Johnson, who knew Paris pretty well, and really wanted a companion, painted such glowing pictures of life in the French capital, that after a little persuasion he contrived to talk over Mr. Ledbury to accompany him.

In the course of a few days everything was arranged for their departure, and Jack did not shave any more, but allowed his mustachios to grow as

they liked,—which proceeding appears to be actually incumbent upon everybody going to France; and Mr. Ledbury, under his directions, procured a flimsy piece of paper, called a passport, from the ambassador in Poland Street, after a pleasant sojourn of three hours in a back-parlour, amongst the queerest lot of people possible to conceive. We have obtained a sight of this document, and now place the copy of a portion of it before our readers, feeling assured that they will be thankful for the portrait of our traveller therein drawn forth.

Remarques.	
A charge d'être présenté aux autorités compétentes.	The steam-packets which leave London for the various parts of the Continent, have an eccentric and highly-divert- ing plan of abjuring the stated and regular times of departure adapted by most of their con- temporaries to Herne Bay and Ramsgate, leaving at all sorts of uncomfortable hours, at their own discretion, generally rang- ing between midnight and six A.M. Accordingly when they had fixed the day for starting, they ascertained that the <i>Emerald</i> , which was to transport them to Boulogne, would leave London at four in the morning; whereupon Jack Johnson intimated that it was all nonsense going to bed, and that they had better enjoy themselves in-
Signalement.	
Taille de 5 pieds 10 pouces Anglais.	
Agé de 24 ans.	
Cheveux . . . <i>blonds.</i>	
Front . . . <i>ord.</i>	
Sourcils . . . <i>blonds.</i>	
Yeux . . . <i>gris.</i>	
Nez . . . <i>retroussé.</i>	
Menton . . . <i>rond.</i>	
Visage . . . <i>ovale.</i>	
Teint . . . <i>pâle.</i>	

stead,—going to bed at any time having been, in Jack's ideas, from time immemorial an unnecessary and painful infliction. Hereat, they went to the theatre, and subsequently drank much brandy and water, and did eat many broiled kidneys, until, as the chimes of St. Magnus struck a quarter to four, they found themselves in Thames Street, close to the wharf, at whose side the *Emerald* was lying preparatory to departure.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE VOYAGE, AND ARRIVAL AT BOULOGNE.

ALTHOUGH it wanted an hour to sunrise, yet there was a tolerable share of bustle in the neighbourhood of the quay. Trucks were discharging their contents on the floating platform below, passengers were arriving, and lights passing backwards and forwards in the cabin-windows showed that they were alive and moving on board; whilst a stream of vapour, visible in the light of the lamps on the bridge, was rising from the spare steam funnel, and breaking into occasional whiffs as the paddle-wheels sullenly turned a stroke or two backwards and forwards; like a musician indulging in a few notes and runs to himself, that he may ascertain all is right before commencing some great performance.

At length the bell rang for the non-voyagers to go on shore; the last arrival of passengers and luggage had been stowed away in their proper places, and, the ropes being loosened, the *Emerald* moved from the wharf, throwing the water from her paddle-boxes in slow and distinct turns.

It was still dusk ; and the reflexion from the fires on board the ships in the Pool, and at the edge of the wharfs, quivered in long lines upon the surface of the river, only broken by the occasional passage of some heavy craft taking early advantage of the tide. Ponderous market-carts were rumbling over London-Bridge, and a coach or two coming from the up-mail-trains of the railway, crossed it in the direction of the city, laden with passengers, who, ensconced up to their eyes in shawls, coats, and comforters, vainly endeavoured to entice back a small portion of the slumber which they had left behind at the terminus. But sleep is a sad flirt—the moment you wish for her company she deserts you ; whilst, on the other hand, if you are really anxious to keep awake, she will be sure to force herself on you whether you will or no.

It was rather cold ; so, as soon as the boat was fairly off, Mr. Ledbury accompanied his Mentor down into the fore-cabin, where they had determined to go ; Jack Johnson observing that it was some shillings cheaper, and that when they had once paid their passage-money, they could migrate where they liked ; and here they deposited themselves with tolerable comfort, amongst some boxes and carpet-bags ; for, as a damp drizzling mist was falling, there was no great inducement to go upon deck, except for those directly concerned in the management of the



vessel; and they had enough to do, keeping a sharp look-out, to prevent her coming in contact with the numbers of barges now thronging up the river. Lights had been suspended from the bowsprit and mast-head, and were now struggling ineffectually with the dull grey of an autumnal morning; whilst the only token to those below that they were on the alert overhead, was an occasional "Ease her!" "Stop her!" "Half a turn a-head!" "Go on!" as obstacles rose in the way of the packet, or disappeared.

The *Emerald* moved on, amidst the crowd of steamers, lighters, colliers, and ships from every part of the world, that bordered the space allotted to the water-thoroughfare; or, as it has been termed, in allusion to the unceasing shouting of coal-heavers, and swearing of bargemen, "the silent highway." The docks, warehouses, churches, and manufacturing chimneys, receded as the pace was quickened on gaining a clearer road. The outlines of Greenwich Hospital faded in the distance, and were soon supplanted by the flat, uninteresting shores which border the river beyond this point.

"There's Blackwall!" ejaculated Johnson, looking out through one of the glazed port-holes that form the cabin-windows. "Many a prime dinner I have had at the Brunswick, after fourpenn'orth of rope on the rail. Do you like whitebait?"

“ I never tasted it,” replied Ledbury.  
“ What is it like ? ”

“ Nothing else in the world—little fish, with large eyes and no bones, dried in flour, and drowned in cold punch—ah ! ”

“ And when is the proper time for it ? ”

“ June, sir ; the balmy month of June. After that they get out of season,—that means, the minnows and little dace get in by mistake,—no go, then—brown bread and tittlebats.”

As they approached Gravesend the preparation of breakfast commenced ; and the clinking of the cups and saucers had somewhat of a comfortable sound, inducing them to make a tolerable meal, under the combined influence of inclination and principle. Inclination, because they were favourably disposed towards the shrimps and cold meat ; and principle, because they were told a roughish passage was anticipated ; and should this prove true, it was as well not to allow the stomach to contract upon its empty self,—a proceeding of that organ which is occasionally acutely painful. When they had concluded their breakfast they ascended upon deck, and beguiled the time with talking, smoking, and drinking bottled stout, until they arrived off Margate, where they took some people on board.

Up to this point of the journey everything had been tolerably quiet ; but on approaching the Foreland the first sensations of qualmishness

became apparent. The passengers began to retire to the cabins, and compose themselves in dark corners of the same. Others, who could not bear the close atmosphere, wrapped themselves up, and stretched out their limbs upon the stools upon deck; whilst a third party seated themselves in a row along the lee-side of the vessel, to be in readiness for anything chance might bring about. The waves increased in size, and the packet accordingly rose and fell in proportion. Steward's boys were seen hurrying about, with glasses of cold brandy-and-water, and solitary biscuits on cheese-plates; and occasionally a mop was lowered by a string into the boiling ocean; or a basin, caught by the wind, now and then performed a journey from one end of the deck to the other, all by itself.

Of course there were several upon whom the motion of the vessel had very little effect; and first and foremost amongst these fortunate individuals was Jack Johnson, who had seated himself upon the roof of the cabin-entrance, in company with an apparently interminable bottle of Guinness', watching the invalids, and making sundry pleasant remarks upon things in general to Mr. Ledbury, who felt particularly queer, but was endeavouring to make himself believe that he was perfectly well.

"I wonder," observed Jack Johnson, as he stuck the stout-bottle into the pocket of his pea-coat, to keep it from rolling away, "I wonder

why stewards of steam-boats are always fat, and have all got curly hair."

"I don't know," replied Mr. Ledbury; "unless constantly being near the fire plumps them up, like cooks and wild ducks."

"I rather imagine," continued Johnson, "that they pick up flesh from living perpetually amongst hot oil and boiled mutton."

"Oh! don't talk anything about boiled mutton!" said Ledbury with an air of disgust, and looking like an animated turnip.

"With respect to their curly hair," Johnson remarked, "I cannot offer a theory, unless it be that all their whiskers get blown from their cheeks to the top of their heads by the high winds!"

There was a wild attempt on the part of the steward to establish dinner about one o'clock; but the sea was too rough to allow of such a proceeding; nor was the atmosphere of the cabin sufficiently attractive to tempt any one down. Our friends, therefore, had some sandwiches on deck; and, to do Mr. Ledbury justice, he behaved remarkably well, for the wind was dead against them, and the sea so turbulent, that at one time the captain had thoughts of going into Ramsgate harbour for the night. About three o'clock it came on to rain, and Ledbury and his companion nestled beneath the tarpaulin of some woolsacks upon deck; where, under the combined influence of the stout, the wind, and the rambles



TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE

of the previous night, they soon fell asleep. Neither the noise upon deck, the dashing of the waves, the motion of the boat, nor the straining and creaking of her timbers as she laboured through the boiling sea, disturbed them ; and they dozed away comfortably until an unusual bustle aroused them from their visions, and they found they were close to the entrance of Boulogne harbour.

The *Emerald* rolled through the surf on the bar, and in a few minutes came into the comparatively still water, between the two barricades of piles which stretch into the sea on either side of the harbour. The bustle on deck consequent upon each passenger endeavouring to pick out his own carpet-bag from amidst one hundred and fifty others, all alike and undirected, aroused our tourists, and they now began to look about them.

“Bless me !” cried Mr. Ledbury, gazing at a figure at the end of the pier, in a pepper-and-salt great-coat, “there’s a French soldier ! I wonder what he wears red trowsers for ?”

“Because the English wear red coats,” said Johnson. “You will see everything in France is by the rule of contrary. We take the left side in driving—they take the right ; we pay when we get out of a ’bus—they pay upon getting in ; we call a pawnbroker ‘my uncle,’—they call him ‘*ma tante* ;’ English washerwomen put the linen into tubs,—French ones get into the

tubs themselves, and wash the linen in the river."

As the steamer at length stopped at the port, and the plank-bridge was thrust out for the passengers to land, a confusion of voices arose, to which the "gabble for the million," that caused the great strike amongst the masons of the Tower of Babel, was perfect tranquillity. A chain was stretched along the pier, to keep off the crowd, and oblige the travellers to pass through the Douane; and this was thronged, like the ropes of a race-course, by the noisy touters from the various hotels, leaning over, and offering the cards of their respective establishments, with the assurance that each was superior to the other. To keep them quiet, Johnson promised every one of them individually that he would make a point of coming to their hotel; and Mr. Ledbury received all their cards with extreme affability, thanking them severally for their attention; and regarding them with mild benignity.

Having pushed forward with the crowd through the gates of the custom-house, they were severally searched—an ordeal which awakened much honest indignation in the breast of Jack Johnson; who finally relieved his wrath by pointing to his Wellingtons, and recommending the custom-house officers to detain them, hinting that as one had caused them so much uneasiness at Waterloo, probably *two* would be doubly annoying. A



similar playful allusion to the Bluchers of Mr. Ledbury, who appeared rather nervous during the inquisition, was also indulged in ; and then, as they emerged from the Douane, they found all the touters waiting for them. It was only by dint of sheer personal strength, and a few liberal and thorough British oaths, that Mr. Johnson preserved himself and his companion from being torn into divers pieces, and carried in divisions to the various hotels with which Boulogne abounds ; there being, on an average, by the latest statistics, one house and a half to every single visitor who arrives there.

Acting upon the contradictory axiom that the dearest hotels are by far the cheaper, they determined upon putting up at the Hotel du Nord ; the commissioner whereof promised to clear their luggage in time for them to get everything that night ; and then they strolled out into the town to inquire after the diligences, and look about them. There was plenty to attract Mr. Ledbury's attention at every step ; and he was more especially amazed at hearing the little dirty children, who were luxuriating in the gutters, speaking French with such purity and fluency. Then he stared at the lamps slung across the streets, and the painted signs of the shops, and the large red hands at the glove-makers ; and was finally lost in admiration, when they turned up the Grand Rue and entered the Cathedral, at the numerous



offerings, including the little ships hung from the ceiling, and the gaudy trappings of the different altars. Jack Johnson, having seen all these things before, was not so excited, but withal found new amusement in making faces at an old woman, who was sprinkling holy-water about with a Dutch broom; and when he was tired of this pastime, in blowing out a mass of candles, about the size of small rushlights cut in half, which were flaring, guttering, and melting, on a triangular stand near the door.

As they left the church they found a crowd in the open place in front of it, assembled round a man in a fine suit of clothes, who was standing on the seat of a gig, and evidently preparing to address the assembled multitude. His companion, a female in a flaunting bonnet and feathers, something in the style of the women who stand under large umbrellas, and keep the *al fresco* gaming-tables on our race-courses, was playing a tune on the cornet-à-piston to attract an audience. When she had concluded, the gentleman commenced his speech as follows:—

“Messieurs et dames,—ne croyez pas que vous avez devant les yeux un charlatan, un empirique, un jongleur, un prestidigitateur: non, messieurs—je méprise ces sciences, autant que je mépriserais moi-même si j’avais le malheur de les professer.”

“What does he say?” inquired Mr. Ledbury.

“ He says he ’s a brick, and no mistake,” replied Johnson.

“ Thank you,” returned Mr. Ledbury, with much gravity. “ What a flowery language the French must be ! I wish I spoke it.”

The man continued,—

“ Mon titre est modest ; je suis le premier physicien de l’univers, et aussi du Boulevard du Temple à Paris : et j’aurai l’honneur, messieurs et dames, de vous offrir des médecines les plus redoutables à deux sous le paquet ; et les allumettes chimiques Allemandes à un sou la boîte. Voyez, messieurs — les allumettes Allemandes !”

“ What are they ?” again asked Mr. Ledbury.

“ They are called, in the Tottenham-court-road dialect, ‘ Congreves, a halfpenny a box,’ ” said Johnson. “ See ! he ’s going to light one.”

“ A présent, du feu !” cried the doctor, using the same grandeur of tone in which the Astley’s leader of a storming party would exclaim, “ Storm the ramparts !” But the doctor’s importance experienced a slight drop ; for, after various rubs, the obstinate lucifers would not light. A laugh arose from the crowd, to which the “ *premier physicien* ” calmly replied,

“ Allons, allons, messieurs : ce n’est rien. L’Allemagne abuse décidément de notre confiance.”

"I wish I could understand him," observed Mr. Ledbury. "Do tell me what he says."

"He says the German opera was a failure, and Herr Dobler is the devil's godson," replied Johnson. "Now look! — he is handing his goods amongst the crowd. Buy something."

"What's this!" asked Mr. Ledbury, taking up a small tinsel roll, about the thickness of his little finger.

The physician returned an answer, which to Mr. Ledbury was about as intelligible as double Dutch spoken backwards, — a *patois* ever extremely difficult to understand.

"It's a *bonbon*," said Johnson. "Try it."

"It's remarkably nasty," replied Mr. Ledbury, putting a small piece in his mouth.

The people around began to laugh at this proceeding; and when Mr. Ledbury, blushing very deeply, and imagining that they were amused with his wry faces at what was possibly an acquired taste, bit off a large piece, and swallowed it boldly, their merriment increased to a roar.

"What is it?" he exclaimed again.

The doctor, comprehending from his gestures what he wished to know, replied, "*Monsieur, c'est une grande cosmetique pour lisser les cheveux.*"

"What a funny mistake!" said Johnson. "You have been eating a stick of coloured pomatum."

Whereat Mr. Ledbury coloured up more deeply than ever, and tried to laugh through his blushes, like a sunbeam on Lord Mayor's day struggling through the red fog; but he was evidently much bewildered.

"Never mind," said Jack Johnson; "keep the rest for your own. You have not got too much hair, and what you have is harsh enough to work into a bird-cage. It will do it good."

And after this pleasant adventure they returned to their hotel. Here the commissioner told them that he had taken places for them the next morning in the diligence, and they accordingly retired to bed, Mr. Ledbury's head being filled with confused visions of smiling *grisettes* in cocked-hats and postilions' boots; and Jack Johnson wondering if a charming little *bouquetière*, whom he neglected to call upon before he last left Paris, would chance to meet him and upbraid him with his want of etiquette.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE JOURNEY FROM BOULOGNE TO PARIS.

THE bright sun was shining as impudently as he well might into the double-bedded room occupied by our travellers at Boulogne, when Mr. Ledbury arose the next morning from his slumbers. It is true his dreams of anticipated pleasure had been somewhat prematurely disturbed by Jack Johnson's singular love of harmony. This vivacious gentleman, always wide awake, and on the present occasion extra vigilant, had been indulging since five o'clock in an extemporaneous vocal and instrumental concert, as he lay in bed,—vocal, as regarded his execution of several new and popular comic songs, which would have frightened John Parry into fits, but were withal very diverting,—and instrumental, from the introduction of a solo on his pocket-comb enveloped in a piece of newspaper, on which he was imitating the cornet-à-piston, and performing an intricate air, which he termed "Hallelujah upside down."

They were not long in completing their toilet ;

and having locked their carpet-bags, and bolted their breakfast, they walked down to the office of the diligence in the Rue de l'Ecu, a quarter of an hour before the time of starting. There was a bustling throng of people, speaking every language ever known, round the *bureaux* of the rival conveyances; and Mr. Ledbury was all astonishment. Indeed, the lumbering form of the vehicles, the motley crowd of passengers, the costume of the postilions and *conducteurs*, and the running accompaniment of extraordinary oaths, and apparently violent altercations, without which the French can never do anything, and which are peculiarly in force during the lading of a diligence,—all these things together formed a scene so thoroughly novel and continental, that minds less reflective than Mr. Ledbury's would have been interested in observing them.

Their places had been taken in the *banquette*, that being the most agreeable as well as the cheapest part of the diligence; and Jack Johnson had rushed into a shop as they came along, and purchased a bottle of *cognac*, and also one of *vin ordinaire* for their especial solace on the road. When their names were called over, he climbed up to his perch by a series of violent gymnastic exertions; and then, taking the bottles from Mr. Ledbury, and stowing them away under the seat, he assisted his friend in the ascent to the summit, which was not accomplished until he had several

times lost his footing, and still clinging to the strap, had swung about in the air like a samphire-gatherer.

At last the reading of the list of travellers was concluded, and the passengers were secured in the diligence,—the luggage-tarpaulin had been strained as tight as a drum,—the postilion contrived to collect about fifty reins, more or less, in one hand from all the six horses,—the *conducteur* first threw up his *portefeuille*, and then himself, and the huge machine moved on. Then Jack Johnson put himself into pantomimic attitudes, expressive of deep affection towards all the females he perceived at the windows; and even Mr. Ledbury, becoming rather joyous and excited, nodded familiarly to strange people in the street, and then, frightened at his temerity, drew back into a corner of the *banquette*, blushing deeply. After that, Jack Johnson asked the *conducteur* if he would favour him with the loan of his horn to play Malbrook with the chill off; and, on receiving it, performed a wild *concerto* thereon which was very effective,—especially the note of savage defiance that he blew at a *gen-d'arme* who was standing at the corner of the Grande Rue, and whose mustachios nearly curled up into the corners of his eyes with indignation at the affront.

These diversions lasted until they got out of the town, and were fairly upon the road, when the *conducteur* lighted his pipe, and the postilion



began to hum a song, which appeared to have neither tune, sense, beginning, nor end, but with which, nevertheless, he seemed greatly delighted, especially a part which he repeated an indefinite number of times, and which ran thus, as well as Johnson could catch it:—

“Dhliou! dhliou! dhliou! dhliou!  
Le postillon de Ma'am Ablou,  
C'est un rusé loup-garou,  
Hi! hi! hi! 'er-r-r-ré nom de Dieu!”

At every village they passed, where there were any French words written up on the houses or shops, Mr. Ledbury pulled out a pocket-dictionary to learn the translation of the words; and when they stopped to change horses, Jack invariably imbibed some of the wine to the health of the natives who were loitering about the diligence, and then treated them with a song,—now expressive of some particular pilot, who upon a fearful night persisted in ordering a refractory passenger to go down below, instead of pacing the deck,—and anon describing his feelings of affection towards a certain ancient and courageous oak standing in his pride without a companion,—after which outpourings of merriment he generally appeared considerably relieved. Mr. Ledbury was much delighted at this exhibition of his friend's talents; and equally seized with admiration at the ingenuity of the postilion, who, upon ap-

proaching Montreuil, contrived to guide the diligence through an archway half its size and height.

Between two and three o'clock they rumbled through the streets of Abbeville, and finally stopped at the principal hotel, where the greater part of the travellers descended to dine; and Mr. Ledbury prepared to follow their example, getting down from the *banquette* with much caution, like a bear from the top of his pole at the Zoological Gardens, after he has been indulged with a bun by an intrepid little boy. Jack Johnson adopted a more rapid mode of egress, and descended over the *conducteur's* seat, somewhat after the fashion of the clown in a pantomime, from the first-floor window of a lodging-house into which he had intruded.

"I suppose we shall dine here," Mr. Ledbury ventured to observe, as soon as he found himself firmly on his legs.

"I suppose we shall do no such thing," replied Jack, "No, no—too dear!—three francs a-head for four courses of nothing, and no dessert! Do you know how they make soup at a travelling *table-d'hôte*?"

Mr. Ledbury confessed his ignorance.

"Well, then," continued Johnson, "they boil all the bones of the day before in equal parts of hot water and lamp-oil, and serve it up with the bread that the horses couldn't eat. That's what makes the French pigs so like greyhounds!"

“What!—the soup?”

“No—the want of it. That which we give our pigs in England they make soup of here. *Potage*, you know, is the French for hogwash.”

“Law!” exclaimed Mr. Ledbury; and he was about to look out the word in his dictionary, when Johnson diverted his attention by saying,

“Come along with me;—I’ll show you a dodge to get something to eat.”

Pushing through the crowd of beggars that encircled the diligence, Jack entered a neighbouring shop, where he purchased a raised pie; then dragging Ledbury after him, who became exceedingly nervous if he left his side for an instant, entered a small *café* on the other side of the way, where several French passengers, chiefly inmates of the *rotonde*, were solacing themselves with bread, fruit, *bière de Mars*, *eau sucrée*, and other exciting and substantial refreshments. Seating themselves at an unoccupied table, Johnson ordered a bottle of *vin ordinaire* at sixteen sous “for the good of the house,” as he termed it; in consideration of which “the house” furnished them in return with knives and forks; or rather French complications of stained wood and cast-iron intended for those implements.

“Now, you see we are dining for one quarter of what we should have paid at the hotel,” said Johnson.

“The pie is certainly very good,” observed

Mr. Ledbury, looking with a searching glance through his spectacles into the interior of it ; “ but I cannot exactly ascertain what it is made of.”

“ That’s the great advantage of French cookery,” replied Johnson ; “ you never know what anything is you eat. When we get to Paris, I’ll take you to dine at a house celebrated for their mode of dressing cats.”

“ You don’t mean to say they eat cats ?” exclaimed Mr. Ledbury, opening his mouth with terror and surprise, until it formed a round O.

“ If you always look so when you are astonished,” said Jack, “ you would be worth your weight in gentles to a fisherman, if it was only to be kept in a perpetual fright, and then sent running about with your mouth open to catch bluebottles.”

“ But do they really eat such dreadful food ?” inquired Ledbury in a confidential manner.

“ Why not ?” replied Jack Johnson, with a look of imperturbable innocence. “ You will have learned to eat anything by the time you get back again. I never knew how nice cats were until I came to Paris. You would be surprised to see how well they jug.”

“ I must leave everything to you,” murmured Mr. Ledbury, with an air of resignation. “ I am quite at your mercy ; and if I must be made sick or poisoned, your will is my law.”

Whatever the pie was made of, it had the effect, in conjunction with the sixteen-sous wine, of lulling our friends into a perfect complacency of feeling towards themselves and everybody else, when they retook their places in the *banquette*, including the *conducteur*, who had also dined at Abbeville, and was disposed to be equally friendly. He spoke English very well, and told them about all sorts of strange occurrences that had taken place on the road, whilst he had been connected with the diligence; some of which he had related so often, that he actually believed them to be true. However, they had the effect of beguiling time; and, as Jack Johnson never allowed himself to be outdone, he also told some extraordinary stories; so that the journey passed very pleasantly on all sides.

As evening approached, and darkness gradually stole over the bare and expansive tract of country on each side of them, the conversation became less animated, and, under the combined influence of travelling, weariness, eating, and drinking, our two friends bethought themselves of trying to catch a little slumber. The *conducteur* routed out two or three sheepskins from under the seat of the *banquette*, which proved very acceptable, as the evening air was rather chilly. Mr. Ledbury shrank into a corner of the vehicle, and, taking off his spectacles, shut his eyes by main force, and fell into the monomania

usually attendant upon night-travelling, of endeavouring to make himself think that he was going to sleep. Johnson, on the contrary, crept over the back of the seat under the luggage-tarpaulin; and, by changing the positions of sundry boxes and portmanteaus, cleared a space sufficient for him to recline in nearly at full length, wedging himself in with stray carpet-bags, and using a sheepskin as a coverlid. When he had arranged himself to his satisfaction, and lighted his pipe, he called out,—

“Halloo, Leddy, how are you getting on?”

“I am very comfortable, thank you,” replied his companion, sorry to find that he himself was not asleep. “How are you?”

“Oh! all right—look here.”

“You seem very strangely situated,” cried Mr. Ledbury, peering into the space behind; wherein all he could see were Jack Johnson’s boots up in the air, and a glow-worm-looking light where his head was, half concealed by a hamper. “I should think that was a very uneasy position,” he observed.

“Not at all—beautiful!” replied Jack. “I’ve never been used to a bed. We had a small house and a large family at home, and I never got promoted higher than the back-parlour sofa. Good night, old fellow!”

The *conducteur* here commenced another anecdote; but finding, after a short time, that he re-

ceived no answer to his queries, and heard no expressions of admiration at the marvellous points in his narrative, he at length desisted, and drawing his fur cap over his eyes and ears, began himself to nod, until the necessity of paying the postilion at the next *relai* aroused him from his fitful dreams.

It was now night. The sky was clear, and myriads of stars were twinkling with frosty brightness in its deep blue vault, barely illuminating the long sweeping outlines of hill and plain that stretched out on either side of the road, where the formal rows of tall spare trees permitted an occasional glimpse of the country beyond. Here and there a solitary farm-house betrayed its locality by the glimmering light from its windows ; but, with this exception, there were few tokens of habitations between the villages on the route, the highway everywhere preserving its straight, unbroken regularity ; and in the villages themselves there was little appearance of life. A single lantern was generally displayed at the *messageries* ; and two or three yawning figures, clumping about in their wooden shoes, helped the postilion and *conducteur* to change the horses ; then all again became quiet, nothing breaking the silence of night but the rumbling of the diligence over the rough pavement, the conversation which the driver was continually carrying on with his horses, and the monotonous jangling of the bells on

their head-pieces and bearing-reins. As the vehicle, about the middle of the night, entered the market-square of Beauvais, every part of the large city was as noiseless as the grave. The very lamps hung across the streets appeared to be thinking about going to sleep; and the weary passengers, most of whom had enveloped their heads in travelling-caps of a shape and fashion which one only observes in a night-diligence, turned out to see what time it was by their watches, with the assistance of the gleaming lantern in front of the *coupé*; and, finding it much earlier than they expected, snored a few expressions of discontent to themselves, and with their eyes half shut, blundered back to their places, to the great annoyance of the people who sat next the door.

Everything must, however, come to an end, whether it be a long night, a dull comedy, or a pianiste's solo at a morning concert; and about five in the morning our travellers stopped to breakfast at a road-side inn, which a glaring blue board with gold letters raised to the dignity of "POSTE AUX CHEVAUX." Everybody looked extremely owlish as they turned out for coffee; and a hasty toilet, without soap, in a pie-dish, did not much improve them. Jack Johnson preferred a good dashing ablution in the horse-trough, which he cleaned out and pumped full again for the occasion; but it was not without great perse-



verance that he prevailed upon Mr. Ledbury to do the same, for it was terribly chilly; yet they felt much refreshed after it, and looked quite ruddy and blooming. It was hardly light now, so they did not care particularly about the graces, but sat down to the coffee and dry toast with as great a relish as if they had been under the hands of a *coiffeur* for half an hour.

In twenty minutes they were again *en route*; and now Jack quitted his roosting-place amongst the baggage, and resumed his old position in the *banquette*. As they neared St. Denis, the villages approximated closer to each other; and when they arrived at that city the inhabitants were beginning to stir themselves; for the French, generally speaking, are an early people, both in getting up and going to bed.

“Have you quite made up your mind where we are to go when we get to Paris?” inquired Mr. Ledbury.

“Not quite,” replied Johnson. “The Hôtel Corneille, in the Place de l’Odeon, would be our mark; but I think they would recollect me. I have not been there since my friend Davis committed suicide.”

“Did what!” exclaimed Mr. Ledbury, starting with a nervous jump to the other end of the seat.

“Asphyxiated himself, you know, with charcoal,” replied Jack. “Davis was studying, as he

called it, at the Hôtel Dieu, and the carnival had run away with all his money. He was a young gentleman whom his father had ‘found out;’ an exceedingly jolly chick, but too jolly by half for his governor, who kept him very short of tin; and at the end of the month he found himself in a state of insolvency.”

“How very dreadful!” exclaimed Mr. Ledbury, pathetically; “and in a foreign country, without friends or resources!”

“Ah!—wasn’t it bad? Well, he could not pay his rent at the hotel, so he agreed to flit; gradually moving all his things away, and shooting the moon to a friend’s lodging in the Rue de la Harpe.”

Mr. Ledbury, having but a very confused notion of the lunar sporting in question, merely ventured to ask, “How did he contrive to do so?”

“Oh! very well,” replied Johnson. “He wore six shirts and three pairs of trowsers at once. Socks did not trouble him much; for the washerwoman had beaten them all away at the tops and bottoms until they were merely bands round the ankles. He put his shaving-tackle and small effects in his Wellington-boots, and carried them out in his hands, under pretence of getting them mended. When he had cleared everything, he committed suicide. You don’t know what a *four du charbon* is?”

Mr. Ledbury confessed his inability to form an idea.

“ It is a small French fire-place, like an anatomical preparation of a flower-pot with a false bottom. Davis filled his with burning charcoal, and when the vapour had spread about enough to choke anybody, he rang the bell, shut the window, and threw himself upon the bed in the attitude of an untrussed fowl.”

“ But he had really no intention of killing himself ?” asked Mr. Ledbury.

“ Will you oblige me by repeating that question ?” replied Johnson. “ Did he mean to kill himself ? Oh ! yes, certainly ; I should rather think he did !” and he raised his hand to the level of his nose, and appeared playing an imaginary *cornet-à-piston* with his fingers. “ When the *garçon* came into the room,” he continued, “ he bawled out for the master of the house, who threw a basin of water over Davis, and rapidly brought him round. He told a sad tale about having been robbed of his little all ; and created such a sensation that I think they would have lent him fifty francs had he wished it. The excitement soon passed away, for the French are always up to their games in that line, and that afternoon Davis walked out of the hotel, and took the diligence to Boulogne.”

“ But was not all this very dishonest ?” asked Mr. Ledbury.

“Very, indeed,” replied Jack Johnston, sighing; “I can assure you the recollection of it cost Davis many bitter moments—very many.”

And Jack looked very much indeed as if he thought it had done so.

About half-past seven the diligence stopped at the barrier, and one of the patrols of the *octroi*, in dark-green clothes, with a sword in his girdle, mounted into the *banquette*, and took his place by their side, much to Mr. Ledbury’s terror, having been informed by Jack Johnson that some one of the passengers would certainly be taken prisoner at the end of the journey. The diligence then crossed the Boulevards, not particularly lively at this time of the morning, and rumbling down the Rue de Grenelle, finally entered the archway of Laffitte’s *Messageries Générales*, in the Rue St. Honoré, where the passengers descended, and the *douanier* commenced the almost nominal process of looking at their luggage.

“What does this man want my keys for?” inquired Ledbury, as the officer spoke to him in a dialect, half English, half French.

“Eh? what?” exclaimed Johnson, assuming an air of fright. “You don’t mean to say he wants your keys!”

“Yes, I do,” replied Ledbury, growing very nervous. “What’s it for?”

“You are suspected of carrying secret dispatches, then!” replied Johnson. “You hav’n’t

—no—you can't have taken advantage of coming with me to tamper with the Government! What papers have you?"

"Nothing," answered Ledbury, "but some Penny Magazines."

"That's it, then!" said Jack. "Good heavens! how could you be so imprudent as to bring a Penny Magazine into France? They saw them at the Boulogne custom-house, and have telegraphed the intelligence to Paris. We shall be sent to the Bastille!"

"Oh!" groaned Mr. Ledbury in acute horror, as the man reclosed his carpet-bag, and gave him the key, telling Johnson in French that he could go when he pleased.

"What does he say?" demanded Mr. Ledbury, anxiously.

"That we are in extreme peril," replied Johnson. "He adds, that we must go to the Hôtel de l'Etoile du Nord, and there await the prefect of police. How could you think of bringing a Penny Magazine into France, when you knew it contained a picture of herring-curing at Yarmouth?"

"I did not mean anything—upon my honour I did not!" cried Ledbury, energetically. "I never knew what herrings had to do with the French government."

"It is now too late," said Johnson, myste-

riously; "our doom is sealed, and here comes one of the government cabs to convey us."

A *citadine* rattled into the yard, and Jack thrust Mr. Ledbury in just as he was about to appeal to the passengers of the diligence. Then getting in after him, they drove off to the Quai St. Michel, where the hotel was situated which Johnson meant to patronize; nor did he deceive his companion, with respect to the treasonable conveyance of the Penny Magazine, until he had amused himself immensely with his extreme fright.

Having chosen a pleasant room on the fourth floor, with a cheerful view of the Morgue on the other side of the river, and the towers of Notre Dame to the right, our travellers refreshed themselves with a comfortable breakfast and a warm bath, and then made their toilette. Mr. Ledbury carefully unpacked his clothes, and having burnt his Penny Magazines—the mere sight of which gave him a nervous twitching,—he arrayed himself in such garments as he thought would be calculated to impress the Parisians with an idea of his style; including a waistcoat which had been amazingly admired at an evening party at Highbury, and a pair of very severe short Wellington boots. When this process was completed they sallied forth, Jack Johnson acting as guide,—a situation which he filled very well, from his perfect knowledge of the localities of Paris.

## CHAPTER IV.

## MR. LEDBURY'S FIRST DILEMMA.

A PLAN is laid down in some of the itineraries for seeing Paris in a week ; but Mr. Ledbury, under the auspices of his friend, very nearly made the tour in a day. Jack Johnson was one of the true "push-along-keep-moving" school ; he first rushed through the Palais Royal, and then up the Rue Vivienne to the Boulevards ; next he took an omnibus to Père la Chaise, and having whirled Ledbury through the cemetery, and showed him the tomb of Abelard and Heloise, he dragged him to the Place de la Bastille, and then drove in a cab to the Louvre ; from this he galloped rather than walked through the Tuileries and up the Champs Elysées ; and, having pulled Mr. Ledbury to the top of the Arc de l'Etoile, and allowed him five minutes to see the view, he bolted down again, crossed the river to the Invalides, and finally stopped to rest in the Gardens of the Luxembourg ; where Mr. Ledbury, to use Jack's phrase, appeared "completely circumslogdollagized" with what he had seen.

“ Now I ’ll tell you what we ’ll do,” said Johnson, as soon as he found breath to speak. “ We will dine outside the Barrière du Mont Parnasse, and finish the evening at one of the *guinguettes*.”

“ But is it not Sunday ?” observed Mr. Ledbury ; a vague idea to that effect just striking him.

It certainly was—although there were few evidences of the fact. All the shops and *cafés* were wide open, the click of billiard balls and rattling of dominoes issuing from the latter : music sounded in most of the streets, which were thronged with well-dressed people ; and the bills of the various theatres against the walls all offered superior attractions. The students had donned their best grey trowsers, and the *grisettes* their prettiest caps. In fact, all looked as gay and cheerful as well might be.

Having rested themselves for a short time, they passed through the gardens, and crossing the Boulevard du Mont Parnasse, arrived at the barrier. Here an amusing scene presented itself. The entire length of the street was thronged with holiday-keepers : the windows were all open, and from each of them quadrille-bands were pouring forth their harmonies ; swings and roundabouts were revolving on either side of the way with singular pertinacity ; images of plaster were stuck up to be shot at from cross-bows at four shots for a sou ; perambulating kitchens, for the sale of



*goffres*, *galettes*—the never-satiating *galette* of the *grisettes* and their admirers,—and fried potatoes, sent abroad enticing odours to the hungry; delicious melons at ten sous each were lying about upon the ground for sale; whilst conjurers, fortune-tellers, and soldiers, pure idle “*tourlourous*,” completed the motley throng.

Elbowing their way through the crowd, they arrived at a large building, on whose front was inscribed :—

“ TONNELIER

AU SALON DES 200 COUVERTS.”

They entered the hall, and ascending the stairs, took possession of one of those small rooms entirely appropriated in Paris to eating, drinking, and philandering. Here Jack Johnson ordered dinner, and whilst it was getting ready they amused themselves by looking out of the window into the gardens, where a quadrille-band was playing, and a large assemblage of young people dancing. Suddenly Johnson darted from his companion, nearly dragging off the table-cloth and everything upon it in his anxiety to get out; and then flying down stairs into the gardens, Mr. Ledbury beheld him, to his astonishment, offering a series of intense bows and salutes to a little black cap, with crimson ribbons, that enclosed a very pretty face.

“ Bless me ! ” thought Ledbury : “ he is going to bring a young French lady up here ! ”

Hereat he pulled up his collar, wiped his spectacles and brushed his fingers through his short hair to improve his appearance, wondering all the time who it could possibly be.

His conjectures were cut short by Johnson’s return with the young lady on his arm, whom he formally introduced as Mademoiselle Aimée. Upon which Mr. Ledbury made a polite bow, and got as far as “ *J’ai le plaisir,* ” where he stuck fast, and then, not knowing what to do, blew his nose, and knocked a crumb off the table-cloth.

The new-comer was a fine specimen of the Parisian *grisette* — small, but perfect in figure, with chesnut hair lying in smooth bands upon her fresh cheeks, and dark eyes that almost spoke, so eloquent was their expression. A very becoming, yet withal exceedingly common shawl, was thrown over her shoulders in a manner only to be accomplished by a Frenchwoman ; and her small foot was set off by an equally inimitable *chaussure*, without the least speck of dirt upon it, although the back boulevards are not the cleanest thoroughfares in the world. Her gown was made of some cheap fabric, yet with a style and perfection of fit that would have raised the envy of any English milliner, and her gloves were equally faultless. How this *tournure* is kept up

upon thirty sous a day — the usual wages of the *grisette*, — we do not correctly understand ; it was not until we discovered so many shops for the sale of little jean *brodequins* and black silk mittens in the neighbourhood of the Ecole de Médecine and Sorbonne that we could at all draw an inference with respect to this singular fact of foreign domestic economy.

“ Do you know the young lady ? ” asked Ledbury, when the confusion of introduction had subsided.

“ Rather ! ” replied Johnson, taking her hand in a most familiar manner, and putting it upon his own, which proceeding caused her to smile. “ She is a very old friend. I used frequently to dance with her last year.”

“ She is very good-looking,” observed Mr. Ledbury, “ and has excellent teeth.”

“ I believe you,” returned Jack ; “ regular mineral ones, as good as the sets on black velvet outside dentists’ doors.”

“ Que dit-il ? ” asked Aimée, appealing to Johnson.

“ Que tu es bien belle, ma mie,” was the reply.

Dinner now appeared, and the trio took their seats at the table. The young lady did the honours with becoming grace. Jack Johnson acted as interpreter, and tossed for a bottle of champagne with Ledbury, who of course lost ; but nevertheless drank his share, and after the third glass grew

quite hilarious, and entered into a long oration upon the charms of female society.

"I wish I spoke French, Jack," observed our friend.

"You'll soon learn it," said Johnson; "never be afraid to try."

"*I spik Angleesh!*" exclaimed Aimée, divining the subject of the conversation, with the usual perception of a foreigner wishing to be agreeable. "I spik Angleesh—rosbif—God-dam—portare-beer."

"Bravo!" cried Ledbury, quite enchanted. "How's your mother?"

"Yes," returned the girl, with a pretty smile.

The dinner passed off in the most pleasant manner; and then, as they had commenced lighting up the gardens, the party descended, and took their seats at one of the small tables which were placed round the space enclosed for dancing, Johnson ordering a bottle of wine at twelve sous—the ordinary outside-the-barrier price.

Our own Vauxhall, as it once existed—and we hope after so many false alarms it will continue to do so—is infinitely superior in the *coup d'œil* of brilliancy and extent to any of the *guinguettes* of Paris; but it lacked the style of company that raises all the continental amusements so far above our own. Place the ordinary frequenters of Vauxhall with their unmeaning, noisy mirth in the gardens of the Barrière du Mont Parnasse,

and they would sink below notice ; but, transfer the spirit and gaiety—the students and *grisettes*, —the *cabinets particuliers*, and general arrangement of the Chaumière and places of its class to Vauxhall, and a fête would take place to which even the gorgeous festivities of the Arabian nights would yield in attraction. And yet, with all their licence, a female might go alone to any of the French dancing-gardens, without the slightest chance of insult.

The lights, the music, and the general excitement, aided by the wine, had such an effect upon Mr. Ledbury that he began to talk French to the waiters, and poke Johnson in the ribs, with an expression of sly humour ; he being, to use his friend's expressive phrase, “ hit under the wing, so that he couldn't fly.”

At length the band struck up one of Labitsky's beautiful waltzes, and Johnson led Aimée into the circle. Emboldened to a singular degree, Mr. Ledbury thought he would attempt a waltz as well ; and after being refused a dozen times in succession by as many different *belles*, at last prevailed on a lady to be his partner. It may be presumed that the performance which ensued was one of a novel and extraordinary kind. He rushed round and round the lady, like a cork in a whirlpool ; and at last completely lost his equilibrium and fell down, dragging his partner with him. A roar of laughter arose from the specta-

tors; and Johnson, not without some difficulty, succeeded in drawing him out of the ring, for, truth to tell, he was becoming rather obstreperous.

This event, however, soon blew over; and they had enjoyed themselves for about an hour and a half, when a circumstance occurred which somewhat spoilt their amusements. A gentleman with a light *paletot* and long dark hair,—a clean original of the dirty copies that flit about the Haymarket,—after dancing opposite to Johnson in one of the sets, came up to Aimée, and asked her hand for the next, accompanying his request by a most winning bow and smile. Now it is perfectly allowable at a *guinguette* to address any young lady without an introduction, in a polite manner, provided she be sitting by herself; but if she is in company with a gentleman etiquette obliges you to ask his permission. In the present instance this courtesy was dispensed with, and Johnson, seeing Aimée hesitating and undecided as to what she ought to do, answered somewhat shortly,

“Monsieur, mademoiselle ne danse pas avec les étrangers.”

The student, for such he appeared to be, took no notice of the reply; but, with a glance at Johnson which savoured somewhat of contempt, again addressed Aimée, saying, coolly,

“Veux-tu danser avec moi, mon ange?”

“ I have told you, monsieur,” said Johnson, horribly nettled at this last speech, and his taking the liberty to *tutoyer* in the most intimate manner, “ that this lady is engaged. At all events, she will not dance with you.”

The intruder muttered a broken sentence, in which the words “ *cochon*,” “ *Anglais*,” and “ *sacré*,” were very perceptible. At last he came in such unpleasant proximity to Aimée, that Johnson pushed him back with his elbow, exclaiming, “ *Va-t-en, canaille !*”

The student with the rapidity of lightning caught up a glass of *vin ordinaire* from the table, and dashed the contents in Johnson’s face, who returned the compliment by planting a well-aimed blow on his adversary’s chest. He reeled back against another small table, which he upset, falling himself amidst the bottles, glasses, and empty coffee-cups that were upon it.

“ There will be the devil’s own row !” cried Johnson to Ledbury. “ Keep close to me, and look out !”

The strife attracted the attention of the bystanders, and the table was immediately surrounded by students ; whilst a confused clatter arose from everybody vociferating at once, to which Babel was a dead silence. Completely hemmed in by young Frenchmen, Johnson perceived that he and his friend would have little chance in a struggle. Mr. Ledbury suddenly

became a prodigy of valour ; he seized two empty bottles by their necks, one in each hand ; and jumping on to the table, whirled them about with his long arms like the sails of a windmill, without however committing any act of aggression.

The student who had first provoked the quarrel, and who had now recovered his feet, sprang upon Johnson like a tiger, and endeavoured to drag him down. But he had met with a little more than his match. Unless a Frenchman can kick your shins, or stick his fingers into your eyes, he has little power to overcome you. Johnson knew that ; and, closing in quickly, he caught him round the waist, and again threw him heavily upon the ground. In a minute seven or eight of his friends crowded round Johnson with the intention of hustling him ; nor was he able to get them off, until Mr. Ledbury jumped down from the table plump amongst them, with an impetus that knocked two down, whirling the bottles about like a wild Indian in a show performing a war-dance. There would now have been in all probability an awkward conflict, had not the municipal guards in attendance marched up to the spot, and broken through the ranks of the rioters. The instant Johnson caught sight of their helmets approaching he informed Ledbury of the fact, and darted away. His companion, however, was too much lost in the excitement of



the fray, and the wine he had imbibed, to understand him ; and in another instant he was somewhat surprised to find himself forcibly seized by two awful-looking soldiers, armed to the teeth.

Explanation was of no use, and if it had been, he could not give it. Half-bewildered, he fell a passive captive into their hands ; for as somebody was to be taken into custody, of course the Englishman was the victim. Marching between their bayonets, he left the garden, and was conducted through the barriers into the city before he knew clearly what had taken place ; and after a brief interview with the sergeant at the guard-house of the *arrondissement*, the unfortunate Mr. Ledbury found himself the inmate of a cell in a French police-office—a prisoner and alone !

## CHAPTER V.

OF THE MANNER IN WHICH MR. LEDBURY WAS EXAMINED BY  
THE MUNICIPAL GUARD, AND OF HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE  
PREFECT OF POLICE.

THE cold grey light of morning crept sluggishly, as though it feared to enter, through the rusty bars in the apertures of the cell that served for windows; and the rumble of vehicles in the adjacent streets began a prelude to the round of noise, traffic, misery, happiness, and crime, which a day in a great city gives birth to, when the luckless Mr. Ledbury woke up, and allowed a clear perception of his not very enviable situation to burst upon him. His slumbers during the night had been confused and broken. Occasionally wild screeches and convivial yells had sounded from contiguous cells; but when these rose to an unpleasant height, or tended in any way to disturb the nerves of the *garde municipale*, (who dozed upon luxurious inclined planes of oak and iron in the outer room,) a visit from one of them generally quelled the riot for a short period, only to return, in most cases, as soon as the func-

tionary's departing footsteps were heard outside the door.

All the excitement of the champagne and *vin ordinaire* which sparkled from Mr. Ledbury's eyes the night before,—all his vapid defiance and valorous demeanour had passed away. A headache, which appeared likely to split his brain into two, had succeeded to his gay imaginings of the previous evening. His eyelids smarted with inflammation and the want of legitimate rest; and moreover he had broken one of the pebbles of his spectacles. His mouth was dry and parched; his hands red and swollen, and looking about the nails as if he had been excorticating millions of new walnuts; whilst his mind revolted at everything he thought of or perceived about him. Two or three companions of his imprisonment, of the lowest class of society, and of whose presence he had hitherto been entirely unconscious, were disposed about the cell. One was still snoring heavily with the stertor of intoxication; another was smacking his lips with thirst, or the lack of the usual morning stimulus from the *marchand de vin* to settle his irritable and depraved stomach; and a third, awake, but scarcely returned to his proper intellects, was gazing listlessly at the window, which quivered in his disturbed vision, or indulging in occasional unmeaning wailings, half melodious, half lachrymose. Mr. Ledbury's mild temperament was ill calculated to

bear up against the first terrible consciousness of his position as he awoke. The whole reality by which he was surrounded faded away in the appalling visions of the galleys, the mines of Siberia, impalement, under-ground cells in the Bastile, laden with heavy chains, the guillotine, the bow-string, and other continental modes of punishment, which rapidly crowded upon his imagination. Suppose, by the mild intervention of the law, he should only be imprisoned for two or three years in a fortress! Gracious powers! how would his family at Islington bear the shock when they came to hear of it!—what desolation would brood on the hearth. What would all his young-lady friends of by-gone evening parties think of him, when they were informed of his disgrace?—and how would the Saturday-night organ, that always played “As I view these scenes so charming” out of tune, contrive to do without the hebdomadal penny which purchased its retreat to an inaudible distance? These were fearful things to reflect upon, and he cried as he thought about them, or rather gave a very good imitation of having a very bad cold in his head. He envied the very flies, that flew in and out the bars just as they pleased, without asking permission of anybody.

An hour or two passed miserably away until about nine o’clock, when the bolts were withdrawn, and he was summoned to the front office

of the guard-house, and confronted with the chief officer of the force to be interrogated ; his extreme state of conviviality on the preceding evening having quite precluded the possibility of getting anything like a correct answer for him.

“ Monsieur,” gruffly demanded the guard, in a voice made ten times more terrible by its transmission through a pair of formidable mustachios, “ dites-moi votre nom, s’il vous plait ? ”

“ Not guilty,” replied Ledbury, who had some faint idea that a species of judicial inquiry was going on.

The supposed cognomination was immediately written down, as near as they could catch it.

“ Où est votre passeport ? ”

“ Je non pas,” answered Ledbury, slightly comprehending the question, and endeavouring to answer it in French.

A very suspicious look from the guard followed this declaration. The truth was, that our hero, having been so short a time in Paris, had not yet got his provisional passport exchanged for his travelling one ; but this he could not explain. The officer, not understanding him, gave orders that his pockets should be investigated.

One of the *corps* forthwith began to search Mr. Ledbury,—a process which was exceedingly interesting to the others. The first article they turned out upon the bench was his pocket-handkerchief, covered all over with a representation of

the flags of different nations, and a large Union-jack in the middle. This was evidently considered a most important discovery, and immediately entered in the police-sheet as a code of private signals. The standard of Algiers strengthened this belief, and the whole of the *garde* pointed it out immediately with great exultation; for, ever since the French won the battle of Constantina, they have formed a singular idea that there never was another victory in the world, and have framed all their toys, *bons-bons*, sports, and public shows accordingly, wherein “*les sacrés Bedouins*” are always represented as getting ten to one the worst of it. Then from the other pocket was produced a most suspicious list of the General Steam Navigation Company;—evidently in correspondence with the pocket-handkerchief; together with his keys, his little French dictionary, some crumbs of biscuit, and some nuts which he had pocketed from the dinner-table, having heard such proceedings were customary in France, and proper to be done. His waistcoat gave up all of the *cosmétique* that he had not eaten at Boulogne, a half-crown pencil-case, which he had been lucky enough to win for eight shillings at a Ramsgate library last year, a few francs, an old pass-check of Covent Garden theatre, with the word “*COMUS*” on it,—another proof of some secretly-organized society—and two or three *jujubes* melted into one conglomerate.

As soon as the search was completed the guard got under arms, and Mr. Ledbury prepared to accompany them to the prefect of police,—comparatively, much in the same state of mind as a condemned criminal who takes his last look at the coppers and stewpans of the Newgate kitchen on his dreary journey to pass through the hatch of the debtors' door, and ascend the fatal scaffold to

“ danser une danse  
Où il n'y a pas de plancher.”

There is generally a crowd of loiterers round the door of the Corps de Garde, to see what delinquents make their appearance in the morning; and when Mr. Ledbury emerged from the portals pertaining to the establishment of “LIBERTE, ORDRE PUBLIC,” between two of the municipal guard with fixed bayonets, he would have given worlds to have become the inmate of one of his own short Wellingtons,—in other words, he wished, like the charity-boys immortalized in the “Wreck Ashore” by the late Mr. John Reeve, of glorious memory, “to have shrunk into his very half-boots with fear.” The little boys,—and sad impudent fellows indeed are those Parisian *gamins*,—pleased at his woe-begone, yet withal benevolent, aspect, ran by his side and huzzaed; the *grisettes* who were on their way to market or to work smiled at his general *tour-*

nure, as some of them recollected his waltzing exploits of the previous night ; and a few idlers at the doors of the wine-shops addressed a few speeches to him in slang French,—the *argot* of the Courtille,—which, as they were not very consolatory, it is fortunate he did not understand.

They had not a very great way to go, and Mr. Ledbury soon found himself at the Prefecture, in the presence of the acting official, who somewhat reassured him by being very like an ordinary man after all. Moreover, he spoke a little English, and could sufficiently understand Mr. Ledbury's defence of the suspicious pocket-handkerchief and other articles, to perceive that there was no great sedition brewing through their means. The charge was entered into, and the master of the *guinguette* appeared to complain of his broken glass ; but, as none of the French students were present to speak of the assault, the case was finally dismissed,—a few francs only being demanded in payment for the broken articles at Tonnelier's. This sudden deliverance quite overwhelmed Mr. Ledbury. He would have entered into a long speech expressive of his gratitude at the leniency of the court ; but another case came on, and the *sergent de ville* in attendance told him he might depart. Whereupon he left the office, and was not sorry to meet Jack Johnson at the door, who had not ventured



inside, for fear that he might be recognised, and declared as one of the offenders.

Mr. Ledbury's first feeling was to treat Jack Johnson with a cool disdain, as if he deeply felt the inhumanity of the latter gentleman in deserting him at his hour of trial. But his better nature prevailed, and he shook hands with his companion, just as if nothing had occurred. Having paid a visit to a neighbouring *coiffeur*, in order that a becoming toilet might be made, they jumped into an omnibus, and proceeded to breakfast at one of the two-franc *restaurateurs* in the Palais Royal.

"Well, Leddy," said Jack, as soon as they were seated in the *salon*, "you've begun well. It is not everybody has the good luck to see so much of French life as you have done during your first twenty-four hours in Paris.

"I think I have seen quite enough for this once," replied Mr. Ledbury.

"Oh! fiddle-de-dee!—take some more wine. I knew a man who stopped a fortnight at Paris without recollecting a sight he had visited, although he kept a journal all the time—after a fashion."

"How was that?"

"Why, like many other of the brute classes of humanity,—the animal 'gents' who visit Paris,—he thought the chief attraction was buy-

ing Cognac at fourteen pence a bottle. He used to get regularly intoxicated at breakfast every morning, and then start out sight-seeing with his companions. At night they told him where he had been, and he put it down; but beyond this he had no idea. Do you like your breakfast?"

"I think my appetite is returning," answered Mr. Ledbury, who was making a tolerable attack upon some *rognons sautés*, and had already finished his *demi-bouteille* of Chablis. "What are you eating there?"

"*Sole au gratin*," replied Jack Johnson; "scalloped sole, if I may term it so,—only it isn't."

"Well, but it *is* a sole, is it not?" observed Mr. Ledbury.

"No more than you are a grasshopper," returned Jack. "How could they afford soles for a twenty-five sous breakfast, and so far away from the sea? The soles here are all flounders cut into shape, kept to acquire a game-flavour, and then served up with sauce and mushrooms."

"What a deception French cookery is!" remarked Ledbury.

"So is English too, occasionally," said Jack, "especially school-pies, and hashed mutton at home on Saturdays—all culinary equivocations."

"I suppose you will tell me next that these are not kidneys which I am eating."

"No more they are," replied Jack; "they

cut them out of *foie de veau*. It's the same with everything else. Stewed fowl is made out of boiled veal, peach fritters from Normandy apples. We have learnt that cats and rabbits are synonymous ; and *bistek aux pommes* is made from—no, I won't tell you. You shall go some day to Montfaucon and judge for yourself.\* I told Aimée this morning that I thought I should make you open your eyes before you went home."

"Oh ! you have seen the young lady, then, already ?" said Mr. Ledbury. "She must be about very early."

"She is—very," answered Jack, shooting a bit of crust from off the table with his finger, and hitting an old gentleman on the nose, who sat near them, with a red riband in his button-hole. Whereat the old gentleman looked remarkably fierce at a little child whom he imagined to be the culprit ; and the little child, after wriggling about in various uncomfortable attitudes beneath his savage glance, finally began to cry, and was immediately knocked on the knuckles with a spoon by its mother for being fractious.

\* This speech is not altogether an imposition upon the credulity of Mr. Ledbury. Our readers may recollect, that a year or two ago several hundred kilogrammes of horse-flesh were seized at one of the barriers by the *octroi* guard, and we know that this event was followed by the immediate failure of some of the cheap *restaurants* of the Quartier Latin.

Having concluded their meal, Jack Johnson informed Mr. Ledbury that he had hunted up some lodgings for them that morning in the Rue St. Jacques, and that they would therefore leave the Hôtel de l'Etoile that day. He added, as their stay in Paris would possibly be for some little time, this would be much cheaper than the hotel, at which he merely intended to rest the first night, that they might look about them for a suitable apartment. Mr. Ledbury could not help smiling, now the danger was all over, at the little advantage he had received from the bed he was about to pay for, which certainly had not been of much service to him,—a circumstance of which Jack Johnson, on his part, did not complain.

## CHAPTER VI.

OF THE QUARTIER LATIN, AND MR. LEDBURY'S  
LODGINGS THEREIN.

SITUATED on the unfashionable side of the Seine, in the same relation to Paris as the Borough is to London, is a dense congeries of narrow, dirty, tortuous streets, that cling and twist round the Sorbonne and Panthéon like mud-worms round a pebble at low-water, and form in their *ensemble* the venerable Quartier Latin. It is a part of the city little known to the mere "weekly visitor" from England, and yet withal a most interesting locality. The flaunting *Chaussée d'Antin* and aristocratic *Rue de Rivoli* swarm with too many of our own countrymen; and the announcement of "Pickled Tongues" and "Cheshire Cheese" in the *Faubourg St. Honoré*, inspires purchasers with a suspicion that the "English spoken here" places a treble price upon every article vended. The frigid respectability and dilapidated grandeur of the *Faubourg St. Germain* reminds us only of a French translation of *Fitzroy Square*; the *Quartier St. An-*

toine is a mass of rags and revolution ; and the Champs Elysées a conglomeration of conjurers, girls' schools, Punch's shows, *cafés*, and boarding-houses.

But the Quartier Latin has claims upon our attention and respect of another description ; for there is no division of Paris more rich in historical associations. Independently of the interest attached to the Sorbonne and the gloomy crypts of St. Génévieve, nearly every street is connected with some romance of the *moyen age* of French history. In the monastery of the Cordeliers, which formerly stood on the site of the fountain near the spot where the Rue de l'Ecole de Médecine debouches into the Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie, we are told that in 1522 a lovely girl was discovered in the garb of a page, who had long waited upon the holy fathers in that capacity,—they being, of course, perfectly unconscious of her sex ; and that the authorities were ungallant enough to whip her from the convent, of which a portion of the walls is still visible in the Rue l'Observance. Here the club of the Cordeliers received the Marseillois auxiliaries previously to the slaughter in the Tuileries on the terrific 10th of August ; and here also the following summer Marat lived, and was assassinated by the heroic Charlotte Corday. Within a radius of two hundred yards from this spot we arrive at the Place St. Michel, where a statue was raised in the reign

of the "mad king," Charles the Sixth, to the memory of Perinet Leclerc, the son of the gate-keeper of the Porte St. Germain, who stole the keys from beneath his father's pillow to admit the troops of the Duke of Burgundy, which led to the downfall of the partizans of Armagnac.

In the Rue St. Jacques,—where Mr. Ledbury's new lodging was situated, the privacy of which we shall anon invade,—on the dreadful eve of St. Bartholomew, Bethune, the young brother of Sully, narrowly escaped assassination by showing a breviary to the soldier, which he had fortunately caught up in the confusion of the massacre. In the adjacent Rue de la Harpe and Cloîtres de St. Benoist, this book again saved him; and, after lying concealed for three days in the Collège de Bourgogne, which stood on the site of the present medical school, he was liberated and pardoned upon consenting to go to mass. The valiant Philip de Mornay at the same period escaped from his house in the Rue St. Jacques, whilst it was actually in possession of the mob, who were pillaging it, although the landlord was a Catholic. Nor should we omit to mention that, at a later date, in the Carmelite convent which stood formerly in the Rue d'Enfer, the beautiful and penitent Louise de la Vallière retired in 1680; where also, after thirty years of pious seclusion and regret, she died.

But there is little now left to recall these by-

gone events; for the buildings have been razed, and streets of tall, dirty houses erected on the spots they occupied, if we except the time-hallowed walls of the Hôtel de Cluny in the Rue des Mathurins, which alone inclose tangible memorials of the Quartier Latin in the olden time. And although the majority of sight-seekers at Paris know as little about that venerable edifice as a west-end exquisite does of Ratchliffe Highway, yet it is well worthy of inspection; with its fine Gothic architecture, its fluted and embossed armour, its curiously-fashioned windows, breaking the sunbeams into an hundred fantastic forms upon the polished oaken boards, for daring to intrude where all should be dim and mysterious; and its domestic relics of other days, which call up with mute and affecting eloquence indistinct imaginings of those who made a home of that old mansion, whose very names have now passed away even from the ancient chronicles.

But we will not farther rout up the mouldering archives of bloodshed and crime,—our business lies not so much with them as with present records of gallantry and merriment; for the Quartier Latin derives its interests from other sources, doubtless more congenial to the taste of our readers. One half of the promoters of the real fun and gaiety of Paris reside within its limits. In a word, it is the abode—we think the *hive* would be a better term, were it not for the ideas



of industry connected with that straw tenement—of nearly all the students of law and medicine in Paris; and very fortunate indeed is it that they have a quartier to themselves, or the walls of the city would not contain them, to say nothing of the iron gates at the barriers. They are all joyousness and hilarity; and their hearts are as light as the summer breeze that sweeps over the pleasant foliage of the Luxembourg gardens, endeared to their memory by so many flirtations on the stone benches. And the French students are not exclusive in their love-making, for they pay their court alike to all. The rosy Cauchoise in her high lace-cap,—the sprightly Lyonnaise,—the “*belle petite Belge*,” (and what pretty creatures the Belgian girls are!)—with the laughing, pouting, constant, coquetting *grisette*, — THE *grisette*, *pur sang*, of Paul de Kock, Jules Janin, Louis Huart, and Beranger,—each in turn receives their protestations of an eternal love for the winter course of lectures, and equally each in turn jilts them. But they feel no very bitter pang when their professions are laughed at. Their love is as light as their hearts; and, when they lose the affectionate glance of one pair of soft eyes, they endeavour without loss of time to rekindle the flame, which is subdued and transient as the ignition of a hydro-pneumatic lamp or a German-tinder *allumette*, in another.

The students are not, however, the only cha-

racteristics of the Quartier Latin. It is a great resort of *marchands d'habits*, or old clothesmen, as we unpolitely term them in England; and one would think they must be in the habit of transacting a considerable share of business with the inhabitants, as they possess an astonishing predilection for the streets about the Ecole de Médecine and Panthéon. Then there are perambulating sellers of almost everything at a certain price; and their barrows present a strange collection of articles, all of which may be purchased for five sous each — plates, knives, whips, decanters, whistles, pins, brushes, lucifers, brooches, looking-glasses, almanacks, pencils,—in fact, an endless variety of wares. It is needless to add, that all are of inferior manufacture, and more or less damaged; but they do for the young housekeepers of the Quartier Latin.

The suite of three rooms—or rather the apartment, with two closets to sleep in, which the enterprise of Jack Johnson discovered for Mr. Ledbury and himself—was a very fair specimen of the lodgings of this part of the world. It was on the fifth floor, for the sake of air and economy, the price diminishing from forty to fifteen francs a month as you ascended the staircase; or, to speak properly, as they talk about the radiation of caloric at literary institutions, “in an inverse proportion to the square of the distance” from the street-door. The furniture was simple and

scanty, but there was enough. They had a fine looking-glass, however, with a marble slab before it, the use of the bellows, a vase of artificial flowers from the Boulevards, and an alabaster clock which did not go; there was also a secretary, which let down to form a species of table, and a stove in the corner,—a curious compound of iron and crockery, with a tin chimney.

“Well, Leddy,” said Jack Johnson, as he pulled his panting companion up five flights of stairs, and into the room, “what do you think of the crib?”

“Why, to tell you the truth, I—”

What Mr. Ledbury intended for a reply was never ascertained; for, as he entered the apartment to inspect it, his feet slid away from beneath him along the glazed-tile floor, which had been polished by the *frotteur* until he could see his face in it, and he measured his length upon the ground.

“Bravo!” cried Jack, quite enraptured at the event. “Here’s your artificial ice without a patent, and nothing to pay for trying it! Get up, old fellow! — that’s it. Are you hurt?”

“Oh! no — not at all,” cheerfully replied Mr. Ledbury, with the air of a person who has tumbled down in the street on a frosty day, but goes away smiling and looking pleasant, inwardly smarting with pain and confusion;—“Oh! no —”

not at all. The room is rather high up, though ; isn't it ?”

“ That ’s the beauty of it,” replied Jack. “ Look at the view ! If we were lower down, we could not see one of those chimney-pots, nor the towers of St. Sulpice. Besides, the higher we get the more noise we can make. And then the furniture !”

“ I don’t think that clock goes,” said Mr. Ledbury, peering at the face of it.

“ That ’s no matter — they never do : the look of it ’s the thing. Did you never win one of them at a travelling bazaar or fancy-fair ?”

“ I never had that good fortune.”

“ That is because you didn’t try soon enough,” said Jack Johnson. “ The clocks are always won the first night the establishment opens. People who come afterwards never get anything but backgammon-boards, boxes of soldiers, and mother-of-pearl salt-spoons. How deficient the diffusion of Useful Knowledge is still, in spite of all the society’s books !”

“ This is a fact certainly worth knowing,” said Mr. Ledbury.

“ To be sure,” replied Jack. “ You may depend upon it, if Government were to start an educational course of ‘ Dodges for the Million,’ it would be of infinite service.”

\* “ You would make an excellent professor.”

“ Rather !” said Johnson ; “ and, from what

I can make out of the newspaper reports of Hullah's plan with his thumb and four fingers, I should do it in the same style — somehow so."

And here candour compels us to state that Jack Johnson forgot himself, and was vulgar enough to indulge in a coarse habit peculiar to the lower classes when they wish to express the word "gammon !" pantomimically.

As soon as their effects arrived, and were stowed away in their proper places, Jack Johnson informed Mr. Ledbury that, as they had come to live amongst the French medical students, they had better attire themselves accordingly, lest they should look too particular in the streets, which he thought they did at present. And, indeed, any one else, with far less powers of observation, would have made the same remark, had they witnessed the crowd of odd beings who were loitering after lecture in the open space between the Café Dupuytren and the Ecole de Médecine when our friends turned out to make some purchases. Some wore their hair flowing down their backs almost as long as a woman's ; others had it cropped quite close, and covered by a flat cap of bright scarlet, without a poke. These cultivated their mustachios until they grew like penthouses over their lips ; those allowed their beards to reign on their chins in unshaven luxuriance. The majority wore trowsers of a dingy grey, brought down very low over the insteps, and

coats with half-inch collars, similar in style to the costume of the seedy foreigners who loiter about the "*Quartier du Lester-Square*" at this time of the year. Some wore dark blouses; others *pale-tots* — a species of light shooting-jacket; and a few had frock-coats. Nearly all carried pipes in their mouths, which they doggedly kept there; removing them only to address a bright-eyed *grisette* who was going by at the instant, and whom they accosted as Clara Fontaine. If you wish to know why this *belle* was called "Fontaine," enquire in the Quartier Latin, and they will tell you.

Guided as usual by Jack Johnson, Mr. Ledbury repaired to a ready-made clothes' establishment in the Palais Royal, attracted by an announcement at the door, of "25,000 PALE-TOTS!!" to choose from — a piece of information which caused much admiration in the passing, reader, at the ingenuity which could pack such a legion of coats into so small an establishment — the whole concern being about the size of the little shops that are let into the wall of Hyde Park, at the commencement of Knightsbridge.

There was a great deal of haggling when they at length discovered some apparel which fitted them. Jack Johnson generally commenced the traffic by offering the vendor just half what he asked; and then he rose his bidding as the other came down, until a price was obtained satisfactory

to both parties. And very brilliant indeed did Mr. Ledbury look when he turned out in a fifty-franc coat, a twenty-franc pair of pantaloons, and a ten-franc waistcoat ; and, when a new hat was added to the costume, he felt so thoroughly French that he almost expected the language to come intuitively with the habits of the country. He did not, it is true, see many of the French



students in spectacles ; but then, 'some of the National Guard wore them, and this was an excellent precedent.

"There's something in these clothes—," observed Mr. Ledbury, with great deliberation, as they entered the Rue St. Honoré.

"The deuce there is !" interrupted Jack Johnson. "What is it?—not the moth, I hope?"

"No — no," continued Ledbury. "I was going to say — or rather to observe — that there is something in these clothes which makes me think I could waltz, if I had a fair trial."

"You shall try with a chair when we get home," returned Jack ; "and I will teach you."

And in five minutes Mr. Ledbury was lost in a day-dream of delirious anticipation of the sensation he should create by his elegant manners and dancing, when his friends at Islington gave an entertainment to celebrate his return from abroad. Indeed, he so far forgot himself as to commence doing his steps along the pavement of the Pont Neuf, until he made a graceful *balancez*, and nearly upset some fried potatoes exposed for sale in one of the hollow buttresses.



## CHAPTER VII.

OF THE EVENING PARTY GIVEN BY MR. LEDBURY AND JACK JOHNSON TO CERTAIN STUDENTS AND GRISETTES, AT THEIR ROOMS IN THE RUE ST. JACQUES.

A FEW days passed very pleasantly, without much stirring excitement. Mr. Ledbury found himself more at home in Paris, and began to hammer out a few words of French, writing home to his friends whenever he found anybody going to London; whilst Jack Johnson employed his time in hunting up all the old students that he had known formerly, who remained at the hospitals, having himself at one time entered the *Ecole de Médecine* when he had some idea of following the profession. Feeling the truth of the axiom, that there was nourishment in whatever did not poison, they usually dined at Viot's, in the *Rue de la Harpe*, for eighteen sous; and in the evening patronized some of the promenade concerts, or went to *Franconi's*, in the *Champs Elysées*, where Mr. Ledbury was more entertained than he would have been at the regular theatres, from his inability to follow the performers.

The latter resort was his most favourite place of amusement ; and being very susceptible, he used to fall deeply in love every other night with one of the *ecuyères*,—now lost in admiration at the beautiful and daring Lejars,—anon yielding to the fascinating attitudes and *haute équitation* of Caroline ; and then forgetting both for the witching blandishments of Camille Leroux. Indeed, so powerful was the impression made by the last-mentioned Peri upon his inflammatory heart, that Jack Johnson discovered him one night standing upon a chair on one leg, and endeavouring, in a graceful attitude, to copy the fair *artiste's* impersonation of “ The Flight of Zephyr.” He had also purchased a map of Paris, and began to find his way about by himself ; and, forgetting all about his imprisonment, had even visited the Chaumière, and descended the *Montagne Suisse* upon a wooden horse, without being at all afraid, and, excepting that he knocked his hat off, and ran over it as he shot down the inclined plane, with unusual success for a first essay.

Although Mr. Ledbury was not exactly one of the sort whom the French students usually associated with, still some of Jack Johnson's acquaintances, to whom he was introduced, were very friendly towards him. And, indeed, if he was not very “ fast,” he was amazingly good-tempered and liberal ; and always looked so benignant and con-

tented through the lenses of his steel spectacles, that at last they took quite a fancy to him. Several little *réunions* were given at their different lodgings ; and although Mr. Ledbury's first pipe made him exceedingly pale and sick, yet after a few trials he succeeded pretty well, and even went so far as to buy a bowl made from white clay in the shape of a Turk's head, for his own especial use.

"I have been thinking," said Jack Johnson, one day, as they sat on a bench in the Luxembourg, enjoying the still balmy air, and watching the droll manœuvres of some recruits who were being drilled, — "I have been thinking that we ought to have a flare-up in our rooms. We have been to a great many of the men's lodgings, and it is but fair that we should ask them back again."

"I am sure it will give me great pleasure," answered Mr. Ledbury ; "but what shall we do with them ?"

"I vote we have a dance," said Johnson.

"Law ! what shall we do for ladies ?"

"Oh ! don't distress yourself upon that account," replied Jack. "I can find plenty who would give their ears to come."

"But, excuse me," observed Ledbury. "Will it not be strange for girls to come alone to a bachelor's house ?"

"Not at all—you don't understand," answered

Johnson. "They are all good girls, although they are *grisettes*; and you shall see how properly young people in Paris can amuse themselves, even in the absence of all restraint, although the English might sneer at the *morale* of such society. Did you see any impropriety in Aimée the other evening?"

"None at all," replied Ledbury, afraid that he had offended Jack Johnson,—“not the least. She was an exceedingly well-conducted young person, in whose company I should find much pleasure.”

"I should think you would," returned Johnson, looking exceedingly sly and wicked. "Well, Leddy, when shall we have the hop?"

"Any time you like," answered his companion. "I leave everything to you, and thank you into the bargain for seeing to it."

The point once settled, Jack Johnson immediately set about carrying it into execution. Nothing could exceed his industry; and even Mr. Ledbury, accustomed as he was to his friend's displays of general utility, was surprised at the many new causes for admiration that turned up daily as he collected the guests, both male and female. The first were not very difficult to call together, for they all jumped at the invitation; but the others required much eloquence and persuasion before they were convinced that everything would be *très comme il faut*. And here

Jack's wonderful omniscience came out uncommonly strong. First, he knew a *petite modiste*, named Suzon, in the Rue Racine, that he was convinced would come. Then, two young artists of his acquaintance, one of whom played the French horn, offered to bring Irma and Célestine, who sat for studies at the *atelier*. Next, he bolted down to his washerwoman's, close to the Ecole Pratique, and persuaded two of the prettiest amongst the laughing, chattering *blanchisseuses de fin* there assembled, to honour Mr. Ledbury and himself with their company, promising them as much *galette* as they could eat, and no end of waltzing and *sirop de grosseille*. And these young denizens of the *lingerie* must not be placed upon a par with the awkward persons who bring home the baskets of clothes in England at the end of the week; on the contrary, they were attractive and *spirituelle*, speaking pure French, that would have passed current in the palmy days of Versailles; although, to be sure, an idiom or two peculiar to the Quartier Latin and its inhabitants, did occasionally break out.

One or two of the young damsels, it is true, hung back a little; but then Jack bought a fine sheet of note-paper, with cockatoos and gold flowers all about it, and the name of the day on a pink tablet up in the corner, and penned an epistle as follows:—

“MM. Ledbury et Johnson présentent leurs

complimens à Mademoiselle (Célestine or Eulalie, as the case might be), et la prient de leur faire l'honneur de venir en soirée chez eux," &c. &c.

It is true that as the little *grisettes* had paid more attention to making up books than learning to read them, they could not very well make out the purport of the note; but they understood the cockatoos and gold flowers to mean something very polite, and the *billet* generally produced the desired acceptance of the invitation.

Aimée, Jack's old flame at Tonnelier's, was, of course, to be mistress of the ceremonies; in consideration of which, that she might look becomingly elegant, he had given her such a pretty pair of net-work gloves, with flowers worked on the back in floss-silk; as well as—ought we to chronicle it?—as well as a kiss and a pair of glass earrings, which he had bought for twenty-five sous (the ear-rings, not the kiss) at a stall beneath the piazza of the Odéon theatre.

Not having a very extensive *salon*, the invitations were limited to a dozen, and the ensuing Monday pitched upon as the evening for the *fête*. As the time approached, Mr. Ledbury got very nervous for fear everything should not go off well; but was unwearied in his efforts, with Jack Johnson, to collect various articles for the comfort and nutriment of the guests. The proprietor of the house, who was a little, fat, irritable man, always looking very hot and greasy, as if he carried a

broken flask of salad-oil in his hat, and allowed it perpetually to run over his face, became very cross and surly at the increasing arrival of parcels that Jack sent home ; and the wheezing old lady on the first-floor, who kept the fat poodle, went into several mild fits of apoplexy, from seeing her pet-dog kicked up to the landing above, or launched down to the one below, in consequence of being always in the way when Ledbury or Jack came by with fresh purchases. There were one or two people in the house that our friends invited for the sake of their chairs and crockery. But they were requested not to talk about it, as all their fellow-lodgers could not be asked ; the house being so tall, and containing so many inmates on its different floors, that you might almost have imagined it to have been one side of a London street turned up on its end.

The eventful evening at last came ; and, an hour before the appointed time of meeting, the *salon* looked exceedingly imposing. Two entire pounds of long wax-candles were disposed about the room, placed in candlesticks as far as the stock would allow, and the remainder set in empty bottles, still, however, garnished with pink and white ornaments by Mr. Ledbury's love of refinement. Jack had hired for five francs, from an Italian boy, a piano-organ, which played an unceasing set of Massaniello quadrilles, and an endless waltz, as well as the Cracovienne.

This was placed at the top of the drawers ; and the performance thereon was to be intrusted in turns to the company. All the fire-wood and charcoal was routed out of the closet, and put, for the sake of cleanliness and convenience, in Mr. Ledbury's carpet-bag and hat-box ; and the shelves were now bending beneath bottles of Cognac and Macon, endless coils of bread and *galette*, and a few flasks of *limonade gazeuse*, *sirups*, and *fleur d'orange*, for the more delicate guests. The whole stock of fruit pertaining to the old woman who kept the stall at the entrance to the Luxembourg gardens was purchased by Jack, and displayed by Mr. Ledbury, with an artistic eye to effect, upon his bed. All the glass, and knives and forks, were shut up inside the stove ; and when all the arrangements were completed, and the candles lighted, our hero thought he had never seen any stage banquet of *papier maché* pine apples and gilt wicker covers look half so imposing.

As the first clock began to stike the hour—a process which in Paris occuppies twenty minutes amongst the different churches—a ring at the bell of their room announced the arrival of their first guests ; for, when an hour of meeting is stated in the Quartier Latin invitations, it is understood to signify the time to a minute. Mr. Ledbury was too much agitated with expectancy to go to the door ; so Jack Johnson opened it,



and introduced Mademoiselle Aimée, "*fraiche comme une rose*," as Paul de Kock would have said had he seen her, all smiles and good-humour. She was immediately installed behind a large coffee-pot, with some spirits of wine, a box of lucifers, and a peck measure, more or less, of lump-sugar. Before long a French horn was heard in the distance playing "*Au clair de la lune*," which, as it ascended the stairs, gradually merged into "*La dot d'Auvergne*," and then a terrible flourish of defiance was blown at the door to herald the entrance of the two young artists, (who were called Jules and Henri,) accompanied by the two young ladies whom they escorted, and who were politely handed to seats by Mr. Ledbury directly they came in,—since, never wearing any bonnets, they had no occasion to take them off. Next came the two inmates of the house—sober clerks in the Bureau de Police,—who looked very blooming, each in a pair of nineteen-sous *gants de Paris* from the doors of the Opéra Comique. And before the first distribution of coffee was ready, a merry musical laugh announced the arrival of the little *blanchisseuses* from the neighbourhood of the Ecole Pratique.

Now in England each individual would have been very silent and formal, making commonplace remarks, and equally unmeaning replies, or quietly wondering who and what the others

were; but here it was quite different. Everybody was as much at their ease as though they had known one another for years; and they laughed and joked, and ate and drank, all so heartily, that it would have done your heart good to have seen them. You would have thought that there were some good qualities in human nature after all—despite the persevering labours of those crabbed essayists who write upon sand-paper with a stick of caustic dipped in lemon-juice, and are so unceasing in their endeavours to make us think what a heartless, hypocritical set we all are. Mr. Ledbury, it is true, did not understand all their jokes, but nevertheless looked very happy, and laughed very joyously at them, which kept the fun going just as well. And when there was a minute's pause, which, however, was of rare occurrence, he handed about the plate of *biscuit de Rheims* with most expressive pantomime; or showed the only conjuring-trick he could perform, of making a rout-cake jump into his mouth from his left hand, by slapping it with the right; in the execution of which piece of dexterity he was allowed by all parties in Islington to be very clever. Everybody had arrived within half an hour; and, when the coffee was all gone, they burnt brandy over lump-sugar in the saucers, and made what they were pleased to term *punch*. After which, all the dirty cups and plates were shot away into the drawers, and the

table turned outside the door, to make room for the dance.

The set was soon formed, and Mr. Ledbury perched himself upon the marble slab to play the organ, having volunteered to be the first musician. Jules put in a few occasional notes upon the French horn, which gave a very inspiring effect to the orchestra, although they were in another key, and belonged to a different tune. There was no angry-looking Municipal Guard or Sergent-de-ville to interfere with them; and if occasionally the dance did get a little reckless, and somewhat livelier than the style adopted in our high circles, yet they expressed no more merriment than they felt, and were at no pains to mask their natural hilarity, or dress Pleasure up in a suit of starch and buckram. When the quadrille concluded, they rested for some refreshment, and Aimée took Ledbury under her charge for the waltz, in which he succeeded tolerably well, having taken lessons of Jack Johnson for a few days previously. One of the clerks did not waltz; but, having modestly stated that he thought he knew enough of music to turn the organ, he was forthwith perched upon the drawers, with a bottle of wine, and kept there for the rest of the evening.

“Well, this is doing it, Leddy,—is it not?” said Johnson, as his friend concluded the waltz, and tumbled up against him.

"Oh! capital!" was the reply. "But, I say, Jack, do you think it's going off well?"

"I should rather think it was," returned Johnson. "There's only one man here I don't know. Aimée says he makes a little too free."

"Ah! which is he?"

"That sallow-looking fellow with the long mustachios. He came with one of Lisfranc's pupils; but Henri tells me he is always lurking about the schools, and is connected with some private gaming-house on the Boulevards."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Ledbury. "He asked me a little while back if I could play *écarté*."

"Well, don't do it—that's all."

"Law! Jack,—I don't know a spade from a club," answered Ledbury, who had about the same idea of playing cards as he had of dancing a hornpipe on his head—perhaps not so much. "I am almost sorry now that I have accepted his invitation."

"Why—where has he asked you to go to?"

"To dine with him to-morrow in the *Louis-le-Grand*—I think he said,—and bring you with me."

"And you have said we'll go?"

"Why, I could not very well help it," answered Mr. Ledbury, getting rather frightened. "He appeared a very gentlemanly fellow, and I had told him we were not engaged."

“ Well, it can’t be helped now,” said Johnson, “ and we must go. I shall not play at cards there, though, for all that.”

Another quadrille finished as he was speaking, so their conversation was interrupted, and Mr. Ledbury was soon engaged looking after their refreshments. As they had been dancing a great deal, Jack thought it was time to introduce supper; and forthwith wheeled the table back into the room, and then they covered it with the viands. Mr. Ledbury was voted by general consent into the chair; and exceedingly convivial was his deportment therein, being much enlivened by a delicious compound of eggs, hot-water, brandy, and lump-sugar, which Jack Johnson concocted and beat up in a soup-tureen. At last he got so lively that he volunteered a song: and, as the chair was too ignoble a situation for him to sing it from, Jules and one of the clerks hoisted him on to the top of the secretary; and there, between two candles, he indulged his audience with a patriotic ballad, which he gave with much spirit, about a certain exceedingly durable flag which had braved all sorts of rows and tempests for a thousand years, and wasn’t worn out yet, but quite as good as new,—in fact, better, for aught he could tell. He was particularly great in his runs and shakes, and drew down thunders of applause when he finished, although of course nobody knew what it was about, except Jack

Johnson. When he had concluded, Aimée sang “*Les Laveuses du Couvent* ;” and the harmony once set going was kept up by all the guests, except the mild clerks, who, nevertheless, made capital listeners, and admired everything they heard. At last Jack Johnson struck up the following student’s song, in the chorus of which they all joined most enthusiastically:—

“ La vie a des attraits  
Pour qui la rend joyeuse :  
Faut-il dans les regrets  
La passer soucieuse ?  
Jamais ! Jamais !  
Le plaisir est Français.

(*Chorus, with great energy.*)

Eh ! ioup ioup ioup — trala la la la !

Eh ! ioup ioup ioup — trala la la la !

La la la !

La la la ! ! ”

There were about thirty verses to this song, and they progressively increased in energy until the last chorus appeared to have aroused the popular indignation of the neighbours. A knocking was heard underneath the floor, which was at first imagined to be somebody beating time in the wrong place ; but, as it continued after the song had finished, Jack formed the idea that somebody below wanted to go to sleep. He was not far out in his notion, for in a few seconds there was a ring at the bell, and the door being opened, allowed an entrance to the land-

lord, M. Mito, and a very imposing-looking *gendarme* at his side, who, before anybody had time to ask what they wanted, said that it was eleven o'clock, and that the orders from the *maire* were for every *hôtel meublé* to be closed by that hour.

The order was at first received by Jack Johnson with a permission for the mayor of the *arrondissement* to go to a nameless locality which forms the last scene in the opera, and the first in the burlesque, of Don Giovanni. But, recollecting upon second thoughts that little is gained by opposing the French police, he filled up a bumper of brandy, and hoped the newcomers would honour him by joining their party, and drinking "to the health of Marshal Soult, and the battle of Austerlitz ; coupled with the memory of the Emperor and the Charter of 1830."

This was a patriotic grouping of toasts that no Frenchman could withstand ; so the *gendarme*, having glanced around him to see that he was not observed, entered the room with M. Mito. This fresh addition to their party after a short time increased the revelry, which grew fast and furious, until an hour of parting unparalleled in the social annals of the Quartier Latin. More invitations on all sides than ever were known were given and accepted ; and the guests finally separated, as the newspapers say, highly delighted with their evening's entertainment.

At daybreak the next morning Mr. Ledbury found himself sitting on the drawers, and turning the organ the wrong way as he sang "She wore a wreath of roses" to the expiring candles. The *gendarme* and Jack Johnson were seated on the floor, playing a very random game of dominoes. M. Mito was discovered in the fire-place, crying, as he thought of his grandfather, who was one of the Old Guard, and died some twenty years before he (M. Mito) was born; and the *garçon* of the house found all the keyholes of the different rooms filled with cherrystones from the *cerises à l'eau de vie*, and the bell-pulls cut away from the doors, whilst all the lamps on the landings were trimmed with *vin ordinaire*.

And in the midst of the confusion which the room presented, in a comfortable *fauteuil* that had been borrowed from the porter's lodge, a cloth in her hand, and some clean cups by her side, as if she had fallen asleep from pure weariness, in endeavouring to set things straight for breakfast, slumbered poor Aimée,—as pretty and neat as ever,—dreaming, no doubt, that she was in some fairy-land, where all the trees were laden with peaches and *galette*, and all the fountains played *eau sucrée* and lemonade.



## CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE, AND MR. LEDBURY'S  
EQUESTRIAN FEATS THEREIN.

THERE is one very gratifying result attendant upon the exhilaration produced by a rather-more-than-usual indulgence in the various convivial beverages which pure French Cognac lends its aid to concoct. Its elevating effects go off with little systematic derangement; and it leaves none of those extra-uncomfortable reflections upon past folly, which the Acherontic rack-punch, the heavy bottled stout, or the coarse, fiery tavern brandy of England invariably induce.

Accordingly, although at the end of the last chapter we left Mr. Ledbury and Jack Johnson in that happy state which would have precluded them, for the moment, from casting up an intricate account, or undertaking any piece of work which required much cool reflection to perform; yet by eleven o'clock in the morning they were, to use Jack's expressive phrase, signifying the peculiar amount of coin which he generally selected to express an orderly state of domestic

economy, "as right as ninepence." Aimée had been aroused from her slumbers, and now, like Kathleen Mavourneen, between sleeping and waking, (for the head of the little *grisette* was not quite so strong as those of her companions, and she was slightly drowsy,) was making coffee for our two friends. However, everything was very comfortable, and the events of the previous night — the "after party" which is always so amusing to discuss with people of slightly quizzical powers — furnished them with much diverting conversation. The *gendarme* had cleared himself off, to make what excuse he best might for his absence from the police-office; and M. Mito had been carefully carried down stairs, and laid upon a pallet-bed, until returning consciousness should allow him to receive his wife's gentle upbraidings with proper feeling and effect.

Mr. Ledbury never correctly understood who Madame Mito was, for he seldom caught a perfect glimpse of her; but sometimes, when he returned home at night, he remembered to have seen a strange, wild-looking female, with a red handkerchief tied round her head, in close conference with the porter's wife over some mysterious compound of bread, fat, and hot water, which they had been manufacturing. Where on earth she got in the day-time no one could ever make out; but Mr. Ledbury had a suspicion that she had something to do at some of the hos-

pitals, as he occasionally saw her flitting about the Parvis Notre Dame, near the Hôtel Dieu ; but whether she officiated as nurse, or *sage femme*, was never determined. Jack Johnson, who had no particular affection for old women in general, and landladies in particular, said that she blacked shoes and shaved cats on the Pont Neuf ; but he evidently spoke with a prejudiced mind.



It was a bright, cheering morning, and the rays of the autumnal sun shone from the clear sky, unclouded by the blacks or smoke which the coal fires disgorge into the air of London. There was a transparency in the atmosphere unknown in our foggy climate, and, attendant upon

it, an exhilaration of spirits,—a sort of indefinite wish to become a balloon, a bird, or a sky-rocket, and dart up joyously at once to the blue expanse above. Having despatched their breakfast, Aimée proceeded to wash the white crockery—the plain white service, of which we see so little in England, and which always reminds us so forcibly of the Continent. She had recovered from her languor, and was now singing, whilst she performed her task, as merrily as *grisettes* only can sing, and very joyous indeed withal over her occupation ; for, next to dancing and hot *galette*, Aimée, in common with her class, was never so happy as when putting the *ménage* in order. Johnson and Ledbury were leaning out of window, and inspecting the contiguous chimney-pots,—the former gentleman also indulging the neighbours with a few vague attempts to blow the French horn, which Jules had left behind him for fear he should tumble over or into it on his way home. Ledbury was lost in a chain of surmises as to what made the French people so fond of keeping birds, as he looked down upon the various cages outside the windows ; and reflecting upon the penny hen-bullfinches he used to buy in the City-road, which always died the next day, being mortally nipped in the neck by the vendor when he introduced his hand down the old stocking to pull them out of the cage.

“I say, Leddy,” exclaimed Johnson, as he stopped in his performance to take breath, looking rather warm and apoplectic, like a Triton with the scarlet fever, “what shall we do to-day?”

“Anything you like until five,” replied Ledbury; “and then, you know, we are going to dine on the Boulevards.”

“Well,—let me think what is best to be done,” returned Johnson, sounding a few wild notes to assist reflection, and then suddenly adding, “What capital things for fun these French horns are, especially when you are close to them in the orchestra of a theatre.”

Mr. Ledbury did not see the great enjoyment derived from such proximity,—in fact he thought quite otherwise, and therefore ventured to ask his friend in what the diversion consisted

“Filling them with peas,” answered Jack, “when the musicians go out between the plays. You should see what a shower the performer blows forth, when he comes back again and tries his first note! Are you much of an equestrian?”

“I have ridden donkeys at Hampstead and Blackheath,” returned Ledbury, half smiling at his vivacious friend’s rapid shots from one subject to another.

“That’s very low,” said Johnson, “unless you mounted without a saddle, and sat quite

back in the true charity-boy style; then, of course, the perfect assumption of the habits of the common classes made the amusement aristocratic. Why didn't you have a pony?"

"Because the donkeys were half price,—nine-pence an hour, including the boy to run behind, and the pins in the stick. But why do you ask?"

"Not having much to do," said Johnson, "I vote for a trip to the Bois de Boulogne. You have never been there; and I want to see how you look outside a horse. I should say, very stylish in those clothes."

Truth to tell, Mr. Ledbury had some misgivings on the subject; but the desire to distinguish himself overcame his scruples, and he consented to go. Aimée received a special invitation to accompany them, coupled with the promise of a donkey all to herself when they got there; and they likewise proposed to call upon Jules and Henri, and request the pleasure of their society.

Toilets are soon made in the Quartier Latin; and ten minutes after they had decided where to go the trio stood on the landing outside the chamber of the young artists at the Hôtel Nassau, in the Rue de la Harpe; principally guided to the door by various diverting sketches, and likenesses of the proprietor of the house, drawn with chalk and charcoal on the walls. When they rang at

the bell Henri came to admit them, and they entered the *suite* of one room and a kitchen pertaining to their friends. The chamber was much in the style of their own, with the exception that it was rather more scantily furnished,—the literal *ameublemens* consisting of a table, two chairs, a wooden box, and the bellows. The sleeping-places were formed by two lockers artfully let into the wall, which, as they were not very broad, it was charitable to suppose were very deep; and that the occupant contrived by some ingenious process, acquired by great study, to penetrate their hidden recesses feet first, and then slumber as he best might with his head at the opening, like a human cannon appearing at an embrasure or port-hole in the wall of an apartment. They had apparently been discussing some poached eggs for breakfast, which, a culinary odour informed Jack Johnson, had been prepared by themselves over a handful of incandescent charcoal in a small *fourneau*; and now Henri was drawing a “soldier of the middle ages” on the ceiling, with a burnt cork tied to the end of an old fencing foil; and Jules, in an easy attitude, with his feet considerably higher than his head, and without cravat or shoes, was enjoying a morning pipe.

As the young artists did not feel much inclined for work that day, and were speculating upon what they should do with themselves, they agreed

very readily to accompany Ledbury and his companions to the Bois de Boulogne. They were not longer arranging their dress than their predecessors, and in five minutes the party started in procession, Jack Johnson leading the way, with Aimée on his arm, the admiration and envy of all the Quartier,—and then Jules and Henri, with Mr. Ledbury attached to them, who being outside, was seldom on the pavement, sometimes in the mud, and very frequently indeed in the gutter. In this order they crossed the river to the Tuileries, where, the space being broader for their promenade, they all five walked abreast, Jules amusing himself by imitating the French horn, as he played the duet in *Puritani*, and making Ledbury unconsciously march in time, with a warlike bearing, at his side.

“That’s Cleopatra’s needle,” said Johnson to Ledbury, as they passed through the garden gates to the Place de la Concorde, and came near the Theban obelisk in the centre. “They are going to bring over her thimble next year; and the Viceroy of Egypt has hopes of discovering the entire work-box.”

“I do not quite understand the meaning of the birds and black-beetles which are engraved about it,” said Ledbury.

“They were done three thousand five hundred years ago,” replied Johnson, “so that styles have altered since then; but it is supposed to



have been a cheap public method of teaching the Egyptian charity-children zoology. It's astonishing how like the birds are to those of the present day."

"But some of them are dressed in short pea-coats, and walking upright," observed Ledbury.

"I believe it was the custom of the birds in ancient Egypt," replied Jack. "Don't you think so, Aimée,—eh?"

"Yes, goodmorning everriwell," answered the *grisette*, smiling, and proud of her English.

They now approached the Champs Elysées, a spot presumed to derive its name from being a most earthly-looking place, with a perfect absence of anything like grass. It was almost too early in the day for the usual crowd of visitors, except two or three *bonnes* with their monkey-jacket children, who were tossing balls about, and pulling their headless wooden horses into everybody's way. Jack amused himself by making hideous faces at the children until they cried; or grasping a handful of their balloon-like trowsers, and running them along the ground upon tip-toe, to the great indignation of their nurses. Jules and Henri amused Aimée by keeping up a perpetual fire of slang with the proprietors of the camera-obscuras, and other perambulatory exhibitions, and addressing sundry speeches to a few grown-up babies, who were gravely circling in the roundabouts of the *Jeu de Bague*,—a remnant of

the old sport of tilting at the ring,—or procuring an amusing emetic in a flight of four ships, which went up and down as they revolved. Then they came to a conjurer, whom Jack sadly put out by baulking his tricks, all of which he could do; and finally, stopped a short time to watch a travelling lecturer upon electricity, who was amusing his audience by discharging bottles of gas with a spark, and blowing the corks out into the air. He moreover electrified individuals at four sous each, and soldiers—there are always crowds of soldiers in the Champs Elysées—for nothing; because, since their pay amounts to nearly two sous a-day, more or less, they cannot afford to spend much in luxuries, and so they prefer all those which are gratuitous. All Jack's powers of persuasion could not induce Mr. Ledbury to be electrified, he having been once talked over to dip his hands into the two basins of water at the Polytechnic Institution, which threw him into a paroxysm of twitchings, from which he did not recover for some time. Aimée, who looked upon the lecturer as a species of necromancer in every-day clothes, was immensely gratified, although she had seen all his experiments a hundred times before; and nothing but the anticipation of a ride drew her from the spot. Mr. Ledbury contributed ten centimes towards the funds of the exhibition, and in return received a succession of bows from the lecturer, so rapid and animated, that they

could only have been produced by attaching his own neck to the prime conductor of the machine.

Laughing and chattering, singing the choruses of interminable songs, and playing off perpetual small practical jokes upon each other, in which Mr. Ledbury was usually the victim, the party approached the magnificent Arc de l'Etoile,—which Jack Johnson informed his friend was erected to celebrate the victory gained by the French over the Prussians and English at Waterloo,—and before long they turned off to the left from the Neuilly road, and arrived at the Bois de Boulogne. There are always various beasts of burden standing for hire in this locality, and Aimée was all impatience for the ride; but the journey thither had made them somewhat hungry, and Johnson proposed a council to decide where they should feed. Mr. Ledbury wished to patronise a decent-looking tavern in the neighbourhood, and they therefore went towards it.

“Garçon!” shouted Jules, as they reached the tavern, “qu’avez-vous à manger?”

“De tout, monsieur,” was of course the reply.

Jack Johnson immediately inquired if oysters were included in the everything.

“Oui, monsieur—elles sont de mardi dernier.”

“Oh, par exemple!” cried Aimée, laughing.

“Des huitres de huit jours!—merci, garçon.”

“Mais de prêt—de prêt?” exclaimed Johnson, “qu’avez-vous de prêt?”

The man drew in a long breath, and then uttered, with a volubility only acquired by hourly practice,

“Du lapin, des pigeons, du bœuf, des côtelettes, du filet, des rognons, des lentilles, et du fromage.”

“Et après?”

“Nous avons des pommes, des poires, du raisin, des mendiants, et des marrons,” repeated the *garçon*, all in a breath.

“Well, then, we don’t want anything,” said Johnson.

Jules here explained that they should pay very dear at this inn for what they had, so that he thought it would be better to buy some eggs at a shop he would point out, and have them cooked by a *marchand de vin*, who would make them into an omelette if they bought their wine there. Mr. Ledbury and Johnson thought the plan excellent, as did Henri and Aimée, who, provided they got somebody to give them something to eat somewhere, had little anxiety respecting the scene of the banquet; and the point being settled, they began to think about their equestrian diversion.

They experienced little difficulty in procuring steeds, but had some trouble in getting Mr. Ledbury, whose courage rather slackened as the moment approached, to mount one. And there was a singularly unsafe look about all the horses that

were exhibited for hire, more especially about the fore-legs, which inclined towards the hind ones, as if the animal was practising to stand with all his feet on the top of a post, like an Indian goat. At last, however, they got him to cross a small broken-kneed pony, with the assurance that they would not go fast. Aimée was placed upon the only donkey they could find, which Mr. Ledbury's inherent gallantry alone prevented him from appropriating to himself; and the rest were soon mounted to their satisfaction, except Jack Johnson, who got on a side-saddle, which immediately turned round with him, and shot him on to the ground; and Jules, who would squeeze himself into one of the chair-seats, evidently too small, which compressed him so that he had considerable difficulty in getting out again. But, after a few ludicrous disasters, all was arranged; and Mr. Ledbury, who formed a not inapt resemblance to a clothes-peg on a line, grew quite bold, and even ventured to beat the pony with a switch, and use imaginary spurs, guiding the animal by a curiously fragile contrivance of string, old straps, tin, and bits of worn-out chain, which the owner conceived to be a bridle. Not having amongst them sufficient money to leave as a deposit for the horses, they took a boy with them, who was also to act as Aimée's running-footman; and the *gamin*, by a series of violent pantomimic attitudes and unearthly noises, finally got all the

animals into a canter. Mr. Ledbury keeping a firm grasp on the pommel of the apparatus which represented his saddle.

They rode about the avenues of the wood for a short time, indulging in various facetious performances; amongst which, Jack Johnson attempted to stand on the back of his horse, after the manner of Mr. Stickney, and even to ride two at once; both which attempts were concluded by his downfall. And then, after awhile, when their appetite reminded them of the proposed meal, Jules offered to conduct them to the place where the eggs were to be bought, and forthwith led the way to a *depôt*, which combined the attractions of a chandler's shop, a "wine-vaults," and a bun-house.

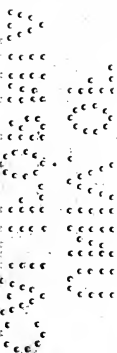
"I think I should like to ask for the eggs," said Ledbury. "It will be a little practice for me in French."

"Go at it, at once, then," said Jack Johnson; "we'll wait here. You need not get off, or perhaps you'll have a difficulty in getting on again. Ride up to the door: it looks more imposing."

And, acting upon his advice, Mr. Ledbury approached the *épiciers*.

Now the shop, like many others, had its floor some two or three steps below the level of the ground outside, and at the side of the door as you entered was a species of trellis-work screen,







to keep unlawful appropriators from walking into the articles displayed in the window, without permission. As Ledbury rode up to the door, saying his speech over to himself, which consisted of the question, "*Avvey-voo des uffs?*" some imp of mischief prompted Jack Johnson to the following trick:—He asked Aimée for a pin; and being supplied with one by the young lady, after that digital investigation of various portions of the dress common with females when a pin is demanded, he inserted it quietly into the haunch of Mr. Ledbury's steed just as he was preparing to speak. The pony, not liking this acupuncture, sprang forward. The small half-wicket that closed the entrance, with a remarkably persevering bell suspended behind it, gave way, and the fore-feet of the animal stumbling down the steps, Ledbury, pony and all, bundled into the shop. But this was not all. To save himself in his fall, he caught at the lattice-work on his right: it yielded, and with it a small shelf that ran across the window, supporting sundry *carafons* of brandy-cherries and preserved peaches, small bottles of liqueurs, and a store of *bonbons*, and dirty sweatmeats resembling treacle-ice. Amidst this terrible *chute*, and covered by its ruins, did Mr. Ledbury enter a shop to buy eggs!

A terrible uproar followed. The master of the establishment, who was luxuriating upon a dinner of cold artichokes in some secret parlour, bolted

out in the wildest manner possible; and, not perceiving Ledbury in his haste (who was performing some curious postures on the floor, resembling the antics of Mr. W. H. Payne when he has sat down on a hot warming-pan in a pantomime,) tumbled over him, and began to kick blindly and desperately against a sack of *haricots blancs*, thinking it was the intruder, until he effected its downfall also. Johnson was screaming with laughter at the door; Jules and Henri were equally delighted; Aimée, half amused, half frightened, after a minute's pause, began to laugh as heartily as the rest; and the little boy who ran behind her, scared out of his wits, scampered off as fast as his legs would carry him. Of course the *marchand* let loose an avalanche of "*sacrés!*" and "*'crrée nom de tonnerres!*" as soon as he saw how things stood. But Mr. Ledbury, who really took a joke better than any one else in the world—and it must be confessed he attributed his downfall to his bad riding, rather than to any malice prepense on the part of the others,—made a rapid offer of payment for the damage committed, which the others volunteered to share as far as their treasuries would go. A few francs set all to rights; and in addition they purchased a quantity of eggs and bread, which were intrusted to the care of Aimée.

They then went back to the spot where they had hired the horses, not saying a word about the

probable state of the knees of Mr Ledbury's pony on the morrow ; and having found out a *marchand de vin*, whose establishment appeared likely to suit their purpose, they entered for their second *déjeûner*, and a very merry meal, yet strictly reasonable, they found it ; so much so, indeed, that Ledbury and Jack Johnson were surprised to perceive the time go so fast, when the hour approached for them to leave, in order that they might dress and proceed to dine with their acquaintance of the preceding evening, according to promise.

## CHAPTER IX.

OF THE BOARDING-HOUSE ON THE BOULEVARDS, AND ECARTE.

THE *pension*, at whose *table d'hôte* M. Auguste Blaquart, as he was called, had invited Mr. Ledbury and his companion to meet him, was situated at the corner of one of the principal streets leading on to the Boulevard des Italiens, and occupied the entire first and second floors, above the *entresol* of one of the very fine houses which adorn this quarter of Paris.

Madame Lagrange, the mistress of the establishment, was about five-and-forty; but still a perfect symmetry of figure, and, to use a theatrical term, an admirable *making-up*, with the assistance of *bandoline*, rouge, and hair-dye, threw off ten or a dozen years from her real age in the eyes of the casual beholder. She was even now a fine woman — had travelled much and seen more, whilst an easy self-possession, a complete knowledge of the usages of good society, and the power of inspiring her guests with the feeling that they could not make very free with her, proved that she had at some time or other moved in a superior set, and adopted their happiest manners.

Evidently French by birth—for every gesture, opinion, and expression showed it—she spoke Italian, German, and English with tolerable accuracy; and, perfectly competent to associate with the higher classes, she yet had tact enough to remove all uncomfortable feeling from those palpably her inferiors in the common attainments of good bringing-up, whom chance frequently brought her into contact with at her own table. Her husband, who never appeared until evening, when the card-tables were formed in the *salon*, was certainly beneath her in every respect. He aspired to the costume and general *tournure* of the *homme comme il faut*; and his gaudy toilet and occasional bouncing talk dazzled many of the *pensionnaires*; but, compared with the really good conversation and demeanour of Madame Lagrange, he reminded one of placing the gayest of Madame Tussaud's creations by the side of one of Canova's statues; although even in this case many lovers of superficial glitter would prefer the former.

Who Blaquart himself was nobody had the least idea. He always took the bottom of the table in the absence of M. Lagrange, and there were many surmises that he had a share in the profits of the house. The English people, of whom there were always several staying here, "recommended on" from Boulogne and Calais, thought him a perfect gentleman; but the Pari-

sians detected now and then some stray, careless action, or loose word, which had evidently been picked up in some questionable *quartier* of the city. And, indeed, one or two of the guests were sometimes astonished to meet him walking with very strange-looking persons, approaching in their dress and manners to those of a *chevalier d'industrie*,—their clothes cut in the extreme style of seedy fashion, and wearing their hats in that very scampish manner which the class known and spoken of in England as “gents” adopt when they wish to be considered men about town.

Ledbury and Jack Johnson were tolerably punctual to their appointment; and after many various mistakes in the direction, which Mr. Ledbury did not perfectly recollect, having left the thin glazed card, with the microscopic name upon it, which Blaquart gave him, at home, they at length got to the house. But here again they were some little time finding out precisely where to go, for the *porte cochère* served as an entrance severally to a printer's, a paper-hanger's, a chocolate manufactory, and the *bureau* of an asphalt company; and the sanctity of each of these establishments was invaded before they pitched upon the inscription at the foot of the staircase, “PENSION AU PREMIER,” which led to Madame Lagrange's *suite* of apartments.

They entered the drawing-room, where most of

the guests were assembled; and Blaquart, who was ready to receive them, immediately came up in a most overwhelmingly polite manner, and introduced them to the mistress of the house. It was rather dark; and as the French people in every station never light a candle an instant before there is the slightest necessity for one, they could not see the company very distinctly, which somewhat comforted Mr. Ledbury, who would have been terribly fluttered at facing a large room full of strangers. He backed into an obscure corner of the room with Johnson and Blaquart, where he remained until dinner was announced, much gratified to find that English was as much spoken in the room as French.

The appearance of the *salle à manger*, when the door was thrown open which communicated with the drawing-room, quite dazzled Mr. Ledbury by its brilliancy. There was, however, little time to ruminate, for the guests hurried in, each person taking his proper place; whilst Johnson and his companion, being the last comers, occupied the two seats at the bottom of the table, one on either side of Blaquart. The table itself looked exceedingly well, with its profusion of cut glass and wax-lights, and the napkins folded and twisted into cocked-hats, fans, roses, fools' caps, and all kinds of fanciful shapes. Every person had also a handsome *carafe* of wine before him, which the English usually drank during dinner,

and the French made to last for a fortnight — the property of each individual being designated by a card tied round the neck of the bottle, a piece of tape, or occasionally a small chaplet like a candle-ornament.

A pretty English girl, introduced to Mr. Ledbury as Miss Bernard, sat next to him, and her mother, an exceedingly fine lady in an appalling turban, opposite. Then, higher up, came Mr. Bernard, a good-tempered, John Bull sort of a man, whose observations drew down perpetual black looks and glances of condensed thunder from his wife ; and on the other side was Mr. John Bernard, a very elegant young gentleman indeed, with his hair curled, and parted behind, a figured light-satin stock, and his wristbands turned over his coat, as if he had washed his hands when too late for dinner, and in the hurry forgotten to turn his cuffs down. M. Coquet, an old bachelor, who came there every day to dine, was placed opposite to Madame Provost, a very fine woman, with eyes and teeth like a hair-dresser's doll in the Burlington Arcade, and about the same expression of countenance. Then higher up still was a young Frenchman of fortune — at least of fortune for a Frenchman — named Achille Derval, and facing him an Italian *contessa*, or any other rank Madame Lagrange chose to give her for the setting-off of her establishment, who did nothing but talk about her



villa at Fiesolé, and make *les grands yeux* at her *vis-à-vis*, who was considerably her junior; and above them were several people, whose names and stations Mr. Ledbury could not catch from the distance. Altogether they sat down about twenty in number; and, taken one with another, like a bag of mixed biscuits, presented a pleasing variety. There was the usual confusion attendant upon settling into their places; and then, when everybody had got their soup and finished it, the usual buzz of boarding-house conversation began. Blaquart inquired of Mrs. Bernard, in broken English, where she had been that day.

“Oh! we had a delightful walk to the Madeleine,” replied the lady, “and returned by the Rue de Rivoli to the Place Vendôme. My friend, Mrs. De Robinson, of Eaton Place, recommended me to do so. What a noble square it is!”

“Don’t see any thing in it, my love,” interrupted Mr. Bernard.

“Young De Robinson says that there is nothing like it in London,” said Mr. John.

“Nonsense!” continued the father. “Put the Nelson column into the middle of Euston Square; do away with the New Road, and knock down all the railings: then see what that would make. The only place worth going to is *St. Cloud*.”

The last word was pronounced as spelt.

"My dear papa," quietly observed Miss Bernard, "I wish you would call it Saint *Clew*."

"Why should I, Annie? — it *is* St. Cloud. C.L.O.U.D. is 'cloud' all the world over, from the skies to a Turnham-Green omnibus."

Mrs. Bernard looked as if she had eaten a capsicum in mistake.

"Paris is a very interesting place," said Mr. Ledbury to the young lady, picking up a little courage to speak without blushing—an acquisition which the *grisettes* had certainly taught him.

"Oh yes! I am so charmed with it!" exclaimed Miss Bernard, with much enthusiasm.

"Miss De Robinson said I should be."

"I shall be very glad to get home," said Mr. Bernard. "I have not made one good dinner since I have been here—all wishy-washy messes. I was much happier before."

"You have been here before, sir?" asked Blaquart.

"Oui, moussou; after the peace: *then* I saw Paris indeed. I was at an English hotel. I came down to an English breakfast at ten; read an English paper until twelve; walked about the city with an English *laquais-de-place* until four; sat down to an English dinner at six; and was lighted to bed by an English chambermaid at night. That 's the way to see a foreign country properly. — Here, Alphonse, Jacks —

what 's your name? — get me some of that *veau-de-ville*."

"Plait-il, monsieur?" asked the attendant, not exactly comprehending him.

"Mon père a besoin d'un petit pièce de vol-au-vent," said Mr. John Bernard; looking towards Ledbury, as much as to say, "Did you hear that, sir?" And then he passed his fingers through his hair, and amidst the convolutions of his satin stock, after the usual manner of very nice young gentlemen.

"I think we have made the best use of our time," observed Mrs. Bernard to the company in general.

"Have you been to the Chaumière, ma'am?" asked Mr. Ledbury, perceiving nobody replied.

"Oh dear, no!" ejaculated Mrs. Bernard, tossing her turban about like the ship on the head of the sailor who always chooses wet weather to sing in the streets. "I believe it is a horridly low place!"

Mr. Ledbury felt very awkwardly situated indeed.

"We have some friends," continued the lady "in Eaton Place—you know the De Robinsons of Eaton Place, I suppose—at least by name?"

It was evident that the De Robinsons were the great acquaintances of the Bernard family: everybody has De Robinsons in their circle.

“ I have not that pleasure,” replied Mr. Ledbury.

“ Ah ! that’s a pity,” said Mrs. Bernard ; “ they are most nice persons. They told me, when they were in Paris, some one wanted them to see the *Chaumière* ; but they were glad they did not. The person who recommended it was nobody, as it turned out. He scribbled things, I believe, for his livelihood—quite unpresentable.”

Jack Johnson, who appeared to have turned his hand to everything in his lifetime, had once been a bit of an author himself, and this speech somewhat annoyed him.

“ Dear, dear,” he thought, “ if the *parvenu* families of London,—in most cases remarkably obtuse people,—whose position in society is so nicely balanced between the exclusive and the vulgar, as to resemble a Logan-stone, which the slightest influence will incline either way, or tumble down altogether ; if these good people knew how the ‘ scribblers ’ see through their struggles for copied display, like a piece of gauze, and in turn look down upon *them*, they would not be best pleased.”

But Jack Johnson did not say a word of this. He merely remarked that, if travellers wished to observe the characteristics of a people, they should see every phase of life ; but if they merely travelled for the sake of saying afterwards that

they had been, or because everybody else did, the end was just as well answered by walking about the fashionable streets.

The *septette* at the bottom of the table had all their conversation to themselves ; for the guests above them being all foreigners, placed a barrier between their communications, as obstructive as a Jura custom-house. Mr. John Bernard now and then addressed a few words to Madame Provost ; but, as she was principally occupied in playing the agreeable to Achille Derval, his attempts at gallant speeches did not create the sensation he desired, and he became silently dignified. M. Coquet, on the other side, finding himself next to the "Countess," was exerting himself to the utmost to be polite, and consequently did not say much to his neighbours ; and the talk at the upper end of the table was kept up in one unceasing murmur, Madame Lagrange apparently answering the questions or replying to the remarks of everybody at once, whether relative to Duprez, Gavarni's last sketch, Milord Seymour et ses 'bouldogues,' Rachel, or the proceedings of the *Chambre des Deputés*.

The ladies retired when dinner was over, and with them the majority of the gentlemen. Our friends, however, remained with the Bernards,—the head of the family persisting in sitting to finish his bottle, as he would have done in England. Blaquart also kept his seat as crou-

pier, and was particularly polite,—too much so for Jack Johnson,—laughing at all the jokes whether he understood them or not.

“Do you go much on the river in London?” asked Mr. John Bernard of Ledbury, with a patronizing air.

“Very frequently,” was the reply.

“In a four or a six?”

“Generally in an iron steamer,” answered Mr. Ledbury.

“Oh!” said Mr. John; “then you don’t know any of the Leander men?”

“I cannot say I do,” returned Mr. Ledbury; “but I know some that belong to the ‘Thunder’ and the ‘Bridesmaid.’ They are very civil.”

Mr. John Bernard here looked very contemptuously at Mr. Ledbury; upon which Jack Johnson whispered to his friend that if he, Mr. John Bernard, put on the same expression again, he would give him such an extraordinary kick, that he should keep it to take to the British Museum as a curiosity when he got home. And Mr. John Bernard, perceiving that his companion was irate, endeavoured to turn the conversation, and began talking about the sweet wager-boat which his friend young De Robinson had bought at Searle’s; and then walked very grandly into the drawing-room, whither Blaquart followed him. Jack Johnson and Ledbury waited behind a little while, until Mr. Bernard had told them two very

long and interesting anecdotes,—one about a large trout he had caught with a single gut; and the other about some certain partridges that got up in a furze field, and flew over the road into a copse, where he brought down two of them. Then Jack Johnson, who never by any chance allowed himself to be outdone, related the story of his catching a porpoise in the Basingstoke Canal; and Mr. Ledbury, warming with the subject and the wine, was commencing the account of an excellent morning's sport he had in the Serpentine, when the old gentleman went into a refreshing sleep, and our two friends into the drawing-room.

They found that several strangers had arrived since dinner, principally gentlemen, who were chatting and vandyking about the room, or paying French compliments to Madame Lagrange, who was making tea and coffee in a kind of boudoir attached to the *salon*. Miss Bernard, having been requested by her mamma to play that beautiful waltz which Miss De Robinson brought her from Berlin, was performing it very indifferently on the piano, under the delusion that she was entertaining her auditors; and the Countess having made an attack upon Derval, to the extreme wrath of Madame Provost, M. Coquet turned his attention to Mr. Ledbury. Our hero was enabled to understand what the Frenchman said tolerably well, as he spoke slowly; and they

were now enjoying a disquisition upon the extreme politeness of the lower orders in England, their love of refined amusements, and the superlative gaiety of a London Sunday.

As soon as tea was finished, a few card-tables were placed about the room, and several couples commenced playing *écarté*. Blaquart was most anxious that Johnson and Ledbury should form a party at the game; but they steadfastly refused, apparently much to his chagrin, although he still kept up his extreme politeness.

Whilst the usual guests of the house were in the room the play was exceedingly limited; but when M. Lagrange arrived, about ten o'clock, fresh games were immediately formed, and in twenty minutes nearly the whole of the company were occupied in playing or betting; and the tables were soon covered with *rouleaus* of Napoleons and five-franc pieces.

"I expected as much," said Johnson quietly to Ledbury. "This place, although ostensibly a *pension*, is in reality a private gambling-house."

"What makes you think so?"

"The style of the players. We were evidently invited to be pigeoned. I can see the set is at present made at Derval; and the 'Countess,' as they call her, is playing with him."

"Do you know *écarté*?" asked young Bernard of Johnson.

"I have no objection to a game or two with



you," replied Jack; "but I should not like to mix with the others. The French seem to have a most singular luck in turning up the king."

Mr. John Bernard crossed the room to get a pack of cards, and Jack whispered to Ledbury,

"Now see me take the shine out of him. I wanted the chance."

They sat down together and played a few games, Ledbury looking on, and perfectly contented in being permitted to score for Jack Johnson on a piece of card cut into snips and angles, which fashion that inventive gentleman had borrowed from an *estaminet* in the Quartier Latin. At length Mr. John found himself so continuously losing, that he began to complain of a headache as an excuse for leaving off.

"'Tis the *vin ordinaire*," said Jack Johnson, "you may depend upon it. I thought you took too much at dinner."

Mr. John Bernard was indignant at the idea that anybody who went on the river in London, and knew some of the Leander men, could allow *vin ordinaire* to have any effect upon him.

"It cannot be that wretched stuff," he replied.

"It is a great deal stronger than you think for," said Jack; "and you would find it so if you drank it quickly, instead of taking your time about it."

"I don't see what that has to do with it," observed Mr. John.

“Now, look here,” continued Johnson; “I’ll bet you fifteen or twenty francs that I make the whole of this pack of cards into ‘pancakes’ before you can drink off a half-pint tumbler of Chablis.”

“Oh, nonsense! I would not take the bet; it would be downright robbery.”

“As you like. Will you bet twenty francs?”

Mr. John Bernard, who had lost about that sum to Jack Johnson, thought there would be no great harm in getting his money back again, so said that he would make the wager.

“But you will give me good wine?” he asked.

“You shall choose it yourself,” was the reply, “and I will drink some first.”

Ledbury being appointed a witness of the bet, Jack left the room, and procured the Chablis from the butler. He then invaded the kitchen; and having established himself instantaneously in the favour of all the servants, by paying them a collective compliment, and kissing Madame Provost’s *femme de chambre*, he got the cook to heat a tumbler-full of the wine until it was nearly boiling, and with this he returned into the drawing-room.

“Are you ready?” he inquired of Mr. John Bernard.

“Perfectly.”

“Then fire away,” said Jack; “but don’t spill any over that pretty stock, because it would

be a pity. You'll find the wine rather warm ; but I presume that is of no consequence. We made no agreement as to temperature—it was merely as to quality."

As Jack rapidly began to make the cards into pancakes, Mr. Bernard put his lips to the wine ; and saw that he was "done;" but still, thinking that he might yet accomplish the task within time, he attempted to swallow it. He sipped, and sneezed, and winced, and coughed,—his eyes watered, and his throat appeared losing its skin, but all to no avail. Jack's agile fingers completed their task before the tumbler was half emptied, and he tossed the last pancake upon the table in triumph as he added,

"I'll trouble you for twenty francs."

There was no getting out of it ; and Mr. John Bernard's anger at losing his money was only exceeded by the feeling of humbled importance which he experienced. Throwing the money on the table with a very bad grace, he marched out of the room without saying a word to anybody ; but inwardly putting Jack Johnson down as a swindler, and determining upon his return home to see if he could not retrieve his loss by taking-in young De Robinson, or some of the Leander men, in the same manner.

During all this time the play had been proceeding at the other tables ; and Ledbury and Johnson turned towards one of them to inspect

the gamesters. There was none of that agitation or convulsion of countenance which they had expected to find in the faces of the players. They all appeared as collected as if they had merely been gambling for sugar-plums; and, whatever they might have felt inwardly, they did not betray the least token of anxiety by their outward demeanour. Now and then, to be sure, when a heavy stake was swept away, the owner muttered a subdued "*sacré!*" but this was all. The Countess, who was still playing with Derval, and apparently losing large sums, seemed far more careful in studying an attitude, in which her round white arm might be seen to the best advantage upon the dark-green velvet of the card-table, than in looking after the chances of the game; although an attentive observer might have discovered that her lip occasionally quivered—but only for an instant—when her adversary made an important point. Lagrange and Blaquart were watching the game very closely, and apparently with anything but pleasure, for Derval was winning everything before him: and Jack Johnson had perception enough to see that the scheme had failed; and that the intended pigeon was going on in a fair way to break the bank, with which the two others had evidently supplied his fair companion. After a short period had elapsed, at a signal from Lagrange the Italian threw down her

cards, declaring she could play no more against such a continuous run of fortune.

Ledbury and Johnson were leaving the room with the intention of going home, when Derval came up to them, and inquired of the latter in which direction their road lay. Finding that they were bound for the Quartier Latin, he hoped they would allow him the pleasure of accompanying them; to which they immediately acquiesced.

“I live in the Faubourg St. Germain myself,” he continued, “but at all events we can go together as far as the river. We will first have a bottle of champagne, and then depart.”

The wine was ordered in, and paid for by Derval, in celebration, as he called it, of his good-fortune. One bottle produced another, and it was nearly one o'clock in the morning when the party left the *pension*, and proceeded on their way home.

## CHAPTER X.

THE WINE-SHOP IN THE MARCHÉ DES INNOCENS, AND  
THE MURDER ON THE PONT NEUF.

THOSE whom business, or pleasure, has compelled to be about at a late hour in the streets of Paris, must have been struck with the dead quiet which reigns throughout the city after the bustle attendant upon the close of the theatres has subsided; and the principal *cafés* on the adjacent *boulevards*—the latest quarters of the town—have closed their doors. There are no night-taverns, as in London; neither is there that undying murmur and motion in the streets which never allows our city to sleep. By midnight the French capital is as tranquil as a city of the dead; nothing breaking the silence but the orderly round of the *garde municipale*, or the occasional apparition of some wretched wanderer crawling about the most secluded and dimly-lighted streets, because he has no home to go to—not even the miserable shelter which four sous will procure him in one of the *garnis* of the low faubourgs.

It was a fine clear night ; and not feeling much inclined to go to bed, at the same time that the fresh air added to their excitement, Johnson, Ledbury, and Derval, sauntered along the line of *boulevards* until they arrived at the corner of Rue St. Denis, when, recollecting that they were coming considerably out of their way, they turned down the street. There was little at this time to attract their attention, and the very lights in the houses had been extinguished : whilst the dull lamps slung across the streets appeared doubly gloomy after the gas in the thoroughfare they had just quitted. On they went until they came to a turning to the right, leading into the *Marché des Innocens*, when Derval insisted upon their going through the market, and having something to drink at a wine-shop which he knew to be open all night. Neither Ledbury nor Johnson were anxious for this intended treat, having both taken quite enough already ; but Derval, who was sufficiently excited to be extremely obstinate, would make them come with him to Paul Niquet's—a *marchand de vin* who never closes his doors, and who conducts his establishment in the same manner as the early houses about Covent Garden Market.

A bright lamp over the door guided them to the shop ; but this was scarcely necessary, for there was such a tumult within that it might be heard at the other end of the *halle*. Derval

tapped with his knuckles against the door, and was immediately admitted, together with Ledbury and Johnson. The small, low room was filled with a throng of the lower orders, who, in point of dirt and repulsive appearance might have ranked on the same plane as the denizens of that part of St. Giles's known as "The Rookery;" consisting of *chiffoniers*, porters attached to the market, *charretiers*, and men belonging to the *chantiers*, or places where firewood is stored for sale, in company with bargemen from the lighters containing charcoal below the Quai de l'Ecole. Some were fast asleep upon the tables and benches, waiting for the opening of the markets; others were quarrelling and vociferating loudly in their cups; and the remainder were lounging against the walls and counter, as they drank their wine or brandy; or devoured some coarse bread, and coarser cold meat, for what was to them a breakfast.

Two or three of the most sinister-looking amongst them gathered round the fresh-comers as they entered, apparently with the intention of hustling them; and Johnson told Ledbury quietly to put his handkerchief into his hat, and keep his hands in his pockets. Indeed they were both anxious, now they had seen what the place was like, to make their exit as soon as they could; but Derval kept pressing them to take some of the cognac he had ordered, continually saying



that he was coming away directly. To satisfy him they put their lips to it, and then their companion gave the remains to a gigantic porter who was standing at his side. The man proposed the health of the new-comer previously to drinking the spirits, and this being received by the other parties with acclamations, Derval announced his intention of treating them all to whatever they liked best. Renewed applause followed this offer, and they crowded round the bar, some of them awakening their fellows to partake of the young Frenchman's bounty, which the master of the shop began to serve out as fast as he was able.

The riot and noise increased with the supply of liquor; and Johnson was more than ever anxious to get away, knowing that Derval had a large sum of money about him—the fruits of his winning at the *pension*,—and feeling certain that if he was not robbed, at all events he would make away with a great portion of it in treating the people about him. At last, however, they prevailed upon him to come with them, Johnson offering to pay for what had been served out, thinking he could get through it better than his companion, and without the chance of being cheated. But this Derval would not allow; and with the true heedlessness of an intoxicated man he pulled a handful of five-franc pieces from his pocket, and threw them along the counter with

careless force ; some of them rolling off upon the floor, and directly provoking a violent struggle between two or three men, who stooped to scramble them up. Taking advantage of this temporary diversion, Johnson gave Ledbury the hint, and, getting Derval between them, they half persuaded, half forced him from the shop, although not without opposition on the part of some *chiffoniers*, who appeared little inclined that they should part company.

“ Well, thank God ! we are out of that,” said Johnson, when they once more found themselves in the *Marché des Innocens*. “ There would have been an awful riot if we had remained there much longer.”

“ They are all good fellows,” observed Derval.

“ No doubt of it,” replied Johnson ; “ but they do not carry their estimable qualities in their countenances. I never saw such a fearful set of ruffians in my life.”

“ I shall not go home,” said Derval, leaning back obstinately as they came into the *Rue St. Honoré*. “ I am too intoxicated.”

“ Why, what are you to do ?” replied Johnson ; “ you cannot keep in the streets all night.”

“ I shall walk about and recover myself,” was the answer ; “ but I shall not go home.”

And, as they approached the office of *Laffitte's Messageries*, he sat himself down upon one of

the large stones against the wall, and announced his intention of not proceeding any further.

“Will he be safe if we leave him?” asked Ledbury.

“He will be quite safe *here* if he does not move,” replied Johnson. “The soldiers are always on guard, and will protect him. If he will not come, we cannot remain with him.”

“And are we to go home, then?”

“I suppose so,” returned Johnson, again endeavouring, but in vain, to get Derval to accompany them. “If I saw any of the municipal guard I would send him to the guard-house. Will you give me your watch to take care of, and what money you have?” he continued, addressing Derval.

“You may have my watch and my money,” was the reply; “but I won’t go home.”

It was in vain that they continued to persuade him. He kept affirming that he should wait to recover himself before he went to bed; so that Johnson, seeing nothing was to be done with him, took the purse and watch, and, accompanied by Ledbury, left him where he had seated himself.

“He cannot lose much, now, however,” said Johnson. “I have got all his money, except a few loose francs, so that he can come to no great harm; and perhaps it is as well that he should

wait a little before he goes home. He might set his curtains on fire if he went to bed in his present state."

They crossed the Rue St. Honoré, and turning round the *façade* of the Louvre, arrived at the toll-gate of the Pont des Arts, a bridge for foot-passengers only, which conducted from the building just named to the Institute on the other side of the Seine. The man who took the money at the gate had not expected any more passengers that night, and was ensconced comfortably in his box fast asleep, having drawn down the glass in front of the pigeon-hole where payment was tendered. Johnson and Ledbury could not think of disturbing him to pay their two sous, and so walked on to the bridge without any interruption.

To our thinking, there is no situation in Paris which presents so picturesque a view as that obtained in looking up the river from the centre of the Pont des Arts towards the Ile de la Cité. It requires but little stretch of the imaginative faculties to fancy that the flight of time has been reversed, and that the fine old city, as it appeared in the romantic days of the *moyen age* of France, once more rises up before us in its early beauty, so trifling a change has taken a place in its general features. Below this point, succeeding epochs have wrought a great alteration in the leading physiognomy of the river's banks. The

Tour de Nesle, with its harrowing associations and dark legends,—the names of the infamous Marguerite de Bourgogne and the wily Buridan, connected so intimately with its fearful records,—have passed away. The grim turrets and fortified walls which formed the boundaries of the old Louvre no longer frown upon the Seine; whilst the rough Tour de Bois has given place to the finest picture-gallery in the world; and, lower down, the verdant expanse of the Pré aux Clercs, whereon, each summer's evening, the clerks of the Basoche and the students of Cluny mingled in the dance with the grisettes of the city, has been covered by modern and unromantic elevations. But above the bridge all is picturesque as formerly. The venerable and time-blackened towers of Notre Dame still rise in the same sullen grandeur above the surrounding edifices, as in the days when the names of Valois, Medicis, and Navarre were foremost in the chronicles of royalty. There are yet to be seen the pointed minarets of the Palais de Justice and Tour d'Horloge, where the first great clock in Paris was set up in 1370; and, nearer to the bridge, the fatal bell of St. Germain l'Auxerrois—that dread tocsin which rang out the knell of the Huguenots—still sounds across the river at eventide. The only building of importance that now no longer exists is the Grand Châtelet; but this intrudes so little upon the line of the Quais,

as to make no great difference in the character of the view seen from the spot where Ledbury and Johnson now stopped.

The soft calm moonlight slumbered upon the old spires and buildings of the city, now wrapt in an impressive silence, broken only by the occasional challenges of the night-watch, or the chafing of the Seine as it whirled through the arches of the bridge in its turbulent course below the Pont Neuf. To the left, the river-front of the Louvre rose like some spectral palace in dreamy outline ; the solitary sentinel, who paraded to and fro below the *façade*, alone presenting evidence of life and motion in its precincts. The towers of the churches along the banks of the Seine now and then gave forth the sound of their sleepy chimes, fainter and fainter in the distance, and, echoing for a while, died away, leaving the universal stillness more apparent. The tranquillity of the scene did not fail to have its effect upon both our friends, and they looked upon it in silence, each lost in his own reflections,—Ledbury simply gazing with interest upon the fine view of a foreign city by moonlight, and Johnson recalling old times and associations with a sentiment which those who knew him most intimately would have given him little credit for exhibiting ; since the world is apt to forget, that the same acute perception of the humorous which imbues its possessor with so keen a relish for fun, can assume an op-

posite aspect whenever matter of graver moment chances to cross its path—and with equal intensity.

They had lingered for about a quarter of an hour on the bridge, unwilling on either side to disturb the waking visions of the other, when their attention was suddenly aroused by a shrill cry in the direction of the Pont Neuf. Another and another succeeded; and now they could discern, by the light of the moon, the outline of two figures, apparently wrestling with each other, on the coping between the summit of the buttresses which form the small shops of that thoroughfare. Immediately after they appeared to be climbing the parapet, and, before a few seconds had elapsed, another cry broke the stillness, and one of the figures fell from the coping into the river below. At the same instant the sentinel at the statue of Henri Quatre discharged his musket, and the remaining individual disappeared immediately, as if he had fallen back upon the causeway of the bridge.

The whole of this transaction had taken up less time than the space occupied in reading the account of it, and Johnson and Ledbury were for the moment bewildered at the suddenness of the action. But the former soon recovered himself, and spoke hurriedly to his companion:—

“There is foul play going on there,” he exclaimed. “Some one has been attacked, and

thrown from the bridge. And see ! he is fighting with the stream alongside the baths."

Whilst he was speaking, the indistinct form of a man could be observed struggling in the water, and directly afterwards rising above it, as he was borne by the force of the rapid current on to one of the shallows below the Ecole de Natation. He remained here for a minute ; but the power of the stream overcame his efforts to stop upon the bank, and, yielding to its strength, he rolled over and over upon the shingle, and then was again hurried on in the deep water.

"He has sunk !" cried Ledbury, who was gazing at the river, half paralyzed with fear.

"No, no ; he is at the surface again," returned Johnson ; "but he has not strength to support himself. Run to the man at the gate," he continued, seizing Ledbury by the arm with nervous anxiety,—*"run to the man at the gate—do you hear?—and awaken him ; we may yet be able to save him."*

With the quickness of thought Johnson took his penknife from his pocket, and, cutting the straps of his trousers, hastily drew off his boots, and threw them upon the platform of the bridge. Then, putting his hat upon one of the seats, he placed in it his money, and Derval's watch and purse ; and, throwing off his coat, vaulted over the parapet-rail, as Ledbury started to arouse the gatekeeper. Clinging to the light ironwork



which forms the body of the bridge, and which everywhere afforded a firm hold to his muscular grasp, he slung himself, with fearful haste, from one beam to another; now swinging from the transverse ties, and now gliding down the uprights, until he reached the stonework from which they spring. The stream was still several feet below him; but, nothing daunted, he threw himself into the river at once, casting aside all idea of danger in the excitement of the instant. The cold, dark water closed over his head, and roared and bubbled in his ears, as he sank some feet below the surface; but, re-appearing immediately, he struck out towards the spot where he expected to find the victim. The stream was, however, too powerful to make any way against it. He perceived this in an instant; and turning towards one of the piers, he was enabled, after much exertion, to cling to an iron boat-ring, which was fixed into the stonework, fortunately within his grasp; and he had barely accomplished this feat, when the individual he was endeavouring to preserve was borne through the arch, still throwing his arms about, vaguely, in the agonies of a drowning man.

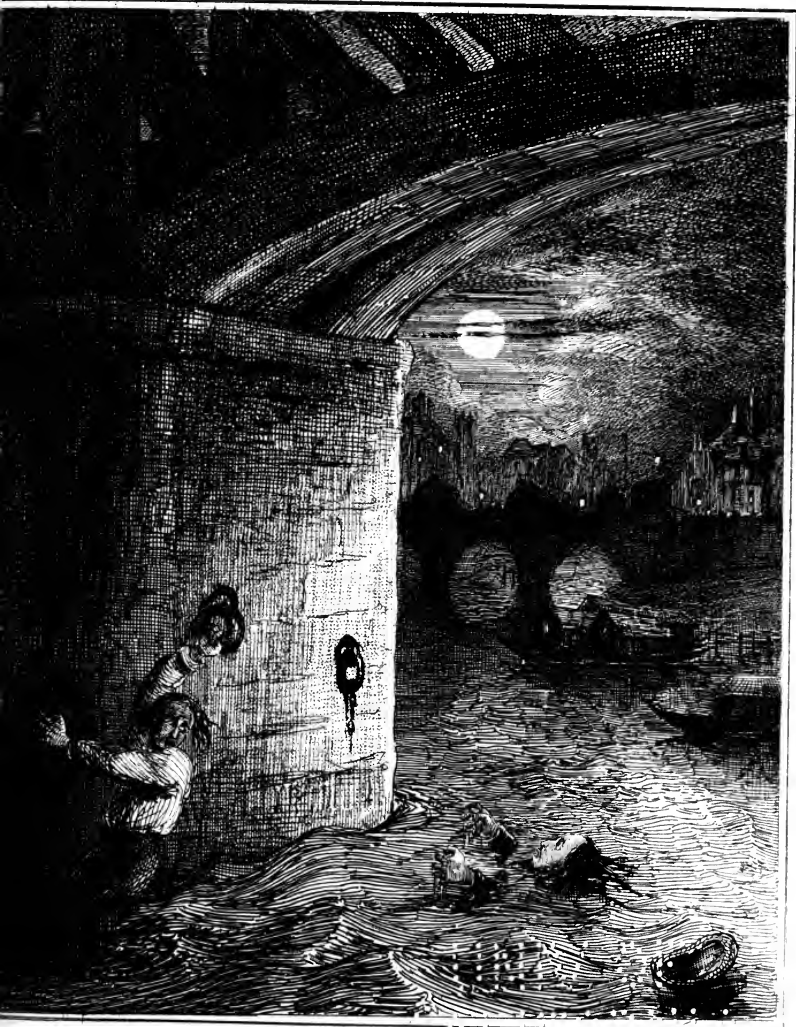
With an additional impetus, obtained by springing from the pier, Johnson immediately dashed through the current, and was at the side of the sufferer. A position of intense peril ensued. The dying man—for such he really was—

made a desperate clutch at Johnson's arm as he approached him ; and, succeeding in the attempt, in an instant they both sank. It was but a moment ; for they rose again almost directly, the hold of the other still remaining the same.

"Leave go my arm !" gasped Johnson—"leave go my arm—we are both lost if—"

But the grasp of the sufferer tightened ; and, in addition, he attempted to throw his leg round Johnson's, in which he would have succeeded, had not the other, with the tact of an expert swimmer, turned upon his side as far as the embrace of the other would permit, and thus prevented the lock which would have been inevitably fatal to both. Again he endeavoured to cast him off, but to no purpose, and again they sank deeply into the roaring water. At last, as they rose once more to the surface, Johnson collected all his force for one effort, and contrived to shake the other off : at the same minute that he dived under him, and came up in his wake. Seizing him by his long hair, he was enabled to keep him away ; and, whilst he supported his head above water, they turned towards the bank.

In the mean time Ledbury had aroused the man at the toll-gate of the bridge. The sentinel at the Louvre had also followed up the shot of the soldier beneath the statue on the Pont Neuf ; and the roll of drums in the Carrousel showed that the alarm had spread. And now,



*The Flood.*

W. M. W.

W. M. W.

the bright muskets of the *garde municipale* were gleaming upon the Quai de l'Ecole, and some on the other side of the river had reached the Pont des Arts; whilst others, directed by Ledbury's gestures rather than his words, hastened down the stairs, and along the edge of the river, with the intention of affording Johnson what assistance they could offer. Returning over the bridge, and taking up his friend's hat and its contents, Ledbury followed the soldiers who were at the side of the stream, and got up to them just as Johnson brought his charge to land. But human aid was now of no avail. A gush of bright arterial blood was pouring from a wound in the chest of the victim; and Johnson's dress, wet and disordered, bore traces of the same florid stream. And the courageous fellow himself sank down from pure exhaustion as he reached the bank.

The alarm had run like wildfire; and, from all the principal streets leading to the *quais*, parties of the municipal guard were now hastening, in the direction of the spot where Ledbury and his companion stood.

"They have secured the assassin, messieurs," observed a gendarme, who now joined the party. "He was disabled by a shot from the *factionnaire* on the Pont Neuf."

"And who is it?" asked several voices eagerly.

"A porter of the Marché des Innocens. He

must have watched the deceased from that neighbourhood."

In a minute or two Johnson recovered his breath; and motioning the guard on one side, that the moonlight might not be intercepted, he parted the long wet hair from the face of the murdered man, and looked upon his features. A cry of surprise and horror broke from him as he recognised the countenance of Derval !

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE BAL MASQUE AND THE GUILLOTINE.

It is the custom in certain melodrames, when any events occur which, although imperatively necessary to the elaboration of the plot, would weary the spectators by their actual representation, to inform the audience through the medium of the play-bill that "a lapse of five years is supposed to take place between Acts I. and II." And, furthermore, it is the habitude of the management, in order that a slight semblance of reality may be given to this supposition, to keep the aforesaid audience waiting as long as the patience of the house generally, and the pit and gallery especially, will permit. Now the first of these arrangements—for the second has merely been mentioned parenthetically, as bearing upon the subject, but having nothing in the world to do with our own case,—is a salutary one; for it saves an immense deal of yawning, and obtrusive attempts to extend cramped legs. And so, in like manner, we beg our considerate reader to imagine that five weeks have elapsed since the events of the last chapter.

Little has occurred in this time to interest or amuse. The recollection of the murder hung upon the minds of our friends for some time, and they felt little inclination to join in any gaiety,—indeed Ledbury was very anxious to return home again, the more so as he received several letters from home, in all of which his family appeared anxious to have him with them at Christmas. The autumn was giving place to winter; and the trial of the man concerned in Derval's assassination had taken place, ending in his condemnation to the last punishment the law can order.

“It is exceedingly fortunate for us,” observed Johnson to Ledbury, as they left the court at the close of the trial, “that the murderer was taken in the fact, or it would have placed us in an unpleasant situation, to say the least of it. We left together that night; we were seen with poor Derval in the wine-shop; and I had his watch and purse in my possession. People have been hung before now where the chain of circumstantial evidence was much slighter.”

No appeal had been made by the criminal to the Court of Cassation against the sentence of the Cour d'Assise, and the sensation gradually subsided as time passed on. And even Ledbury and Johnson thought less about it, and began to join the students, as formerly, in their amusements; the former of our tourists looking forward with some excitement to a masked ball



which was advertised to take place, *par extraordinaire*, at the Pantheon Theatre,—the play-house which, with the Luxembourg rendezvous for the admirers of the very minor drama, (“*chez Bobinot*,”) forms the chief resort of the students and *grisettes* inhabiting the Quartier Latin.

As soon as the day was announced, Mr. Ledbury’s inquietude, respecting what sort of a dress he should appear in, gradually rose to a degree the most unsettled and perplexing. Aimée, who, of course, was to form one of the party, had long ago made up her mind to go as a *débardeur*, such being the proper and appointed costume for *grisettes* under such circumstances; Johnson had also determined to accompany her as a postilion; so that Ledbury was the only undecided one of the *trio* as to his character, and, in company with the others, he routed over the stores of every *magazin des costumes* within a radius of one mile from the heart of the Quartier Latin.

“Here’s a magnificent *moyen age* dress,” said Jack Johnson, as they stood inspecting the gay contents of a wardrobe in the Rue de Seine. “Look at it—‘a page of the thirteenth century.’ You would look very great in that.”

But Mr. Ledbury had not a pleasant idea of his own appearance in feathers, flesh-coloured tights, and spectacles; and so he turned over the page for another.

“ I think I should like to go as a Chinese,” he meekly observed.

“ Pshaw !” replied Jack, “ what can you do as a Chinese ? You couldn’t *galoppe* in that spangled bed-furniture. You had better choose a *débardeur*, after all. It’s a good dress, — cheap and stylish, as they say of a ten-shilling Taglioni.”

And so Mr. Ledbury, acting upon his friend’s advice, and moreover assured that he would create a great sensation, agreed to go as a *débardeur*.

The dresses were sent home on the morning of the day, and Mr. Ledbury amused himself until evening by comparing them one with another, and disputing which was the most becoming, which dispute ultimately ended in his deciding that his own was. Although the performances at the theatre did not conclude until a late hour, and the ball was not to commence until twelve, yet our friends were dressed and all ready by half-past eight, — Aimée having been politely accommodated with a dressing-room by a young *repasseuse* in one of the *mansardes* over their chamber. And when their toilets were all finished, and they sat down to coffee in Ledbury’s room, there were certainly not three lighter hearts in all Paris, — perhaps not in all the world. Aimée appeared to have derived additional attraction from her piquant costume.

Jack Johnson was rollicking about, and singing snatches of twenty different songs as he rode steeple-chases on the chairs, to the great dislocation of their joints, and the bewilderment of the lodgers underneath, or occasionally, in the joyousness of his heart, threw his wig at Led-



bury, covering him with a cloud of powder. And Mr. Ledbury himself, not yet exactly understanding where he was in his new attire, but withal immensely pleased with it, was only wishing that some of the young ladies he had met at parties in London could see him now ; wouldn't they be glad to dance with him — that was all ! — and how all the other young men at Islington would sink into insignificance by his side !

Precisely at midnight they started for the ball. They had but a few yards to go from their door, and it was a fine night, so they walked in their dresses very quietly down the street to the theatre, — a proceeding which did not create any curiosity in the Quartier Latin. There was a great crowd of visitors at the doors ; but, as only the ladies wore masks, they recognized several of their friends, including Jules and Henri, who came out uncommonly gay as two hussars. And although the *salle* is small, yet, when Mr. Ledbury was fairly in the theatre, the lights, the music, the dresses, and, above all, the lively and happy crowd around him, formed in their *ensemble* such a very enchanting scene, that he began to think the accounts of the festivities in the Arabian Nights were not the enormous lies he had always considered them to be.

“ Gard' les jambes ! ” cried a man, running along the room, holding a tin can of water with

a hole in it, which which he appeared to be flourishing hieroglyphics on the floor.

“What’s he doing, Jack?” asked Ledbury.

“Aux places ! messieurs et dames, s’il vous plait !” exclaimed the master of the ceremonies, causing a sensation which precluded an answer to the inquiry.

“Un vis-à-vis !” shouted twenty voices at once.

“Go and ask that little girl in the lancer’s dress to dance,” said Johnson to Ledbury.

“But she don’t know me, Jack,” was the reply. “Shouldn’t I be introduced ?”

“Fiddlesticks !” returned Johnson ; “go and ask her, I tell you, and then come and stand opposite to me.”

Mr. Ledbury mustered up courage, and contrived to make himself understood. He returned with the *grisette*, and placed himself opposite to Johnson ; the band played a few bars of the opening quadrille, and the various sets fell into their places.

The dance proceeded, enlivened in the orchestral department by a glorious *cornet-à-piston* ; and after the last figure such a *galoppe* took place, that Ledbury soon saw the use of the man with the water-pot in laying the dust. He was not very successful at the *galoppe* ; but his partner was, so that it was of no great conse-

quence. She bounded off with him the instant the air began ; and, what with running very fast, leaping, sliding, and taking terrific strides, he was enabled to keep up with her. To be sure, he tumbled down now and then, and got run over by twenty couple or so ; but this was of no importance, for everybody was too much absorbed in their own whirl to look after anybody else ; especially Jack Johnson and Aimée, who appeared to have taken an entire leave of their senses. And what a stirring chase it was ! Down the declivity of the stage as hard as they could tear, to the boarded pit, and then flying wildly round underneath the boxes, and up again to the back of the theatre ! It was indeed a *galoppe d'enfer*, as Aimée called it, especially to the inspiring "Postillon," with the accompaniment of the crack of the whip, and jangling of the diligence bells. Then came the *Danois galoppe*, and the *Fille du Danube*, and the *galoppe* from *Alma*, and a dozen others equally spirited ; and waltzes by Labitsky, Lanner, and Strauss, without end ; until the very hours took it into their heads to *galoppe* too, and the night passed away long before Ledbury, Johnson, or Aimée perceived or wished it.

At the close of one of the dances, Mr. Ledbury was sitting by his partner, endeavouring to wash down some of the dust with which they were choked, with *limonade gazeuse*, when John-

son came up to him, apparently rather excited, and said,

“ I have just heard something worth knowing. The *gendarme* you see keeping order at the corner of the stage, was at the river the night Derval was murdered. He has recognised you and me,”

“ Well, what then ?” asked Ledbury in great fear, imagining that they were both to be immediately guillotined, in consequence, on the spot.

“ He says that the assassin is to be executed this morning. It is not generally known yet ; but if we like, as we were concerned in the affair, he can take us into the prison. Will you go ?”

“ I do not think I should like to see it, Jack,” replied Ledbury.

“ Nonsense, man ! you need not see the execution. Come along : we must get these things off, and meet the *gendarme* outside the theatre in twenty minutes. It is now nearly six.”

Half entreated, half persuaded into going, our friends left the house, and, hurriedly changing their things, returned to the theatre, where the officer was waiting for them. There were several cabs and coaches for hire at the doors ; getting into a *citadine*, therefore, they drove immediately to the prison—a sudden and impressive contrast to the scene of revelry which they had just quitted !

On arriving at the prison, they remained at the

door a short time, whilst the gendarme entered to obtain permission to bring them in. He returned almost directly; and, motioning them to follow him, at the same time that he ordered the vehicle to wait, led the way through many passages, gloomy in the dull light of morning, to the prison parlour. Several people were here assembled, and in the centre of them stood the criminal. Johnson directly recognised him, and pointed him out to Ledbury, who, perfectly overcome with terror, scarcely dared to breathe. A venerable abbé was at his side offering him the last consolations of religion, which the condemned man appeared to receive with respect and even gratitude. He took off a heavy gold ring, such as the gipsies wear, and gave it to the priest, requesting it might be forwarded to some female whose name he mentioned.

“She will know shortly,” he said, “that she need not call to see me to-morrow.”

Ledbury thought it strange that there should be a female who could care for this blood-stained, fearful man !

The persons whose duty it is to attend the culprit now came into the room, and having removed some of his upper garments, and laid bare his neck, proceeded to cut off his hair. As the coarse, dark locks fell on the ground, he picked up one and gave it to the abbé, requesting that it might be forwarded with the ring.



His demeanour was altogether calm and unmoved. Once only he shuddered ; and that was when, upon looking down, he saw the collar of his shirt upon the ground, which had been cut off by the executioner. He moved it with his foot out of sight, and became as tranquil as before.

A short time was spent in the necessary arrangements; and then the gendarme, approaching Johnson, told him, if he wished to witness the execution, he had better start immediately for the spot in some vehicle, as the *cortège* was about to leave the prison, and they would go at a rapid pace. A strange impulse now drew Ledbury on to see the end of the tragedy, in spite of its revolting nature; and, hastening out of the prison, they re-entered the *citadine*, and drove to the barrier.

It was now about twenty minutes to eight; and the inhabitants of Paris, being an early people, were quite alive and busy at that hour: but, as the time and place of the fatal operation of the guillotine are always kept secret, Johnson and Ledbury did not see that tide of spectators pressing towards the spot that they would have observed in England, until they arrived at the Val-de-Grace. Here several were evidently bending their steps in the direction; for in the immediate neighbourhood the elevation of the scaffold is a sufficient signal of what is to follow. When they came to the Place St. Jacques, at

the Barrière d'Arcueil, in the centre of which the guillotine was erected, a great crowd of spectators had assembled, forming a large semi-circle, commencing from the barrier on either side. They were chiefly of the lower orders, but several respectable-looking females were amongst them ; and two or three decent carriages were drawn up outside the ring and under the trees of the inner boulevards, filled with people. Of course all the windows commanding a glimpse of the area were fully occupied ; and Ledbury was astonished to see two or three young girls, some of them evidently belonging to a superior sphere of life, anxiously gazing at the fearful preparations for bloodshed. The mob was certainly amusing itself in a most hilarious manner. Itinerant vendors of cakes, and *marchands de coco*, were perambulating amongst them ; and a stranger would have thought, from their demeanour, that they were waiting during the *entr'acte* of an exhibition of mountebanks.

The guillotine was erected on a platform about seven feet from the ground, resting upon an open framework of timber, all of which was painted red. By the side of the plank on which the criminal was to be confined was a long basket filled with sawdust ; and the box for the reception of the head was strapped to the uprights between which the knife was to fall. On one side of the scaffold was a common market-cart,

in which two men were calmly sitting, and smoking their pipes—this was to convey the body away; and on the other was a light waggon, to carry off the scaffold itself when taken to pieces after the execution. The circle of spectators was preserved by municipal guards and mounted troops of the line, stationed in pairs at short distances; and the gendarmes were conversing in small groups in the centre.

A little before eight, a cloud of dust at the extremity of the Boulevard d'Enfer proclaimed the approach of the cavalcade—a circumstance which seemed to be hailed with much glee by the mob. A large detachment of horse-soldiers came first, at a sharp trot; then some of the city functionaries, in a small, four-wheeled fly with one horse; and, lastly, the criminal van, in which were the prisoner, the abbé, and the executioner. The van opened behind, and was consequently backed against the steps of the guillotine.

The priest first alighted, after him the condemned, and then the executioner. The culprit still preserved his firmness, his complexion denoted no internal emotion; and yet the solemn silence reigning around him, which was now but faintly disturbed by the shuddering of the multitude—a minute before so heedless—appeared nevertheless to produce upon him at that awful moment a lively impression. Looking steadily

at the knife, which, heavily weighted, and fixed at the top of the uprights, was now throwing back the beams of the morning sun, he ascended the steps, listening to the last exhortations of the abbé. On reaching the platform he shook his head, as if he wished to address the crowd; but, merely exclaiming "Oh ! Dieu !" between his teeth, he took his place upon the plank, which was immediately lifted up, and pushed horizontally under the knife. A piece of wood, having a notch to correspond to the neck of the culprit, was then pushed down, to prevent his drawing back his head; and, as he was lying upon his face, he was actually looking into the box wherein his head was to fall.

All was now still as death; and, the catch being loosened, the knife fell swiftly down the groove; but the momentary check, as it cut through the vertebræ of the neck, could distinctly be perceived. Two immense jets of blood immediately spouted out from the divided arteries; but in an instant the body was pushed over into the basket, as well as the box containing the head. The scaffold was then washed down with pailsful of water, and the crimson stream poured down in torrents upon the pavement of the road; next to this, the basket containing the body and head were placed in the cart, which drove quickly off; and then the crowd gradually dispersed, apparently much

gratified with the spectacle they had witnessed.

In the evening Johnson and Ledbury visited the barrier again. All the apparatus was removed, and the ever-gay population of Paris were passing outside the gates, to enjoy themselves at the *guinguettes*. But the stain of blood was still upon the road, and the hearts of our friends sickened at the recollection of the morning's tragedy.

"I have seen a great deal," said Ledbury, "since I left home, and shall not readily forget all I have witnessed; but I do not care to stay in Paris any longer. The winter is coming on, and I shall not be sorry to be once more at home again in England."

## CHAPTER. XII.

## OF THE JOURNEY HOME.

ENGLAND ! — there is a sturdy look about the very word — a kind of touch-me-if-you-dare expression, which almost forces you to imagine, that a few hardy letters of the alphabet had combined together to make a stand against any idle meddlers who wished to disturb their order. The word is a symbol of the nation, and the unflinching letters are emblems of the people who compose it.

A fine bracing wind was rollicking about the Nore, tumbling the waves over each other in reckless jollity, or blowing them off in clouds of spray, and rattling amidst the sails and cordage of the vessel, as the *City of Boulogne*, with all her steam on, and her sails set, entered the mouth of the Thames, bearing her cargo of foreign importations, and homeward-bound travellers. A glow of happy excitement was upon every face ; and, as the banks of the river came nearer and nearer on either side, and the little villages and church-spires appeared, one after

another, upon the shore, there arose ten thousand old associations, and thoughts of Christmas and its revelry, and all those loved ones who made home, *home*, — whose dear voices had not fallen upon the ear for so long a time, although their images had ever been present to the heart. The very water seemed endowed with life and feeling, and leaped and danced so merrily round the prow, and sparkled so joyously in the bright sunbeams, as it was thrown back again to its parent deep in laughing foam, that every drop appeared a messenger of greeting and affection to welcome the wanderers home.

“Round the Foreland” is at all seasons a passage of extreme uneasiness to voyagers of delicate fibre and nervous temperament; but, when the packet arrived in the comparatively still water of the river, the passengers became somewhat reassured, and one by one appeared upon deck. Mr. Ledbury and Jack Johnson were amongst the number; for, having seen all that they considered worth observing in Paris, and, moreover, discovering that the treasury was commencing to run rather low, they were now returning to London. And, indeed, Mr. Ledbury was anxious to eat his Christmas-dinner at home, and drink his elder wine “on his own hearth,” as he expressed himself, (which Jack Johnson defined as meaning inside the fender, amongst the fire-irons,) so that their proceedings had at last been somewhat hur-

ried. Had they been less so, we might have related how they gave a farewell party in their old rooms to their old companions ; how Aimée, Jules, and Henri came to the office of the "Aigle," in the Place de la Bourse, to see them off ; how Aimée was very sorrowful indeed at parting with them ; and how Jules consoled her with a two-franc dinner in the Palais Royal, after they had gone ; how Aimée sought further consolation by going as a ballet-girl into the corps of the Académie Royale the next week ; and, finally, how Mr. Ledbury felt one pang, and one only, at returning, which arose from his not having been able to achieve a pair of mustachios during his stay, which would have rendered him so distinguished when he walked through Islington on the first Sunday after his return. We would have related all these things at length, and many more besides ; but we wished to follow the adventures of our hero as closely as time would allow ; and all this would have taken up so much space, that we should have experienced some little difficulty in coming up with him again. So the reader must please to imagine these events in any fashion most congenial to his own fancy ; and having, in company with the two travellers, given a long good-b'ye to Paris, we will all meet again, Ledbury, Johnson, the reader, and ourself, on board the steam-boat which is now conveying them up the river on their return voyage.



Jack Johnson, who appeared endowed with a singular propensity always to sit on out-of-the-way and uncomfortable situations, had perched himself on the top of a pile of luggage, and was now in company with Ledbury, making out the various localities as they appeared on the edge of the river.

“There’s old Gravesend!” cried Jack, as he recognised the piers of what the guide-books call “this agreeable place of salubrious recreation.”

“And there’s Rosherville! further on,” continued Ledbury. “I say, Jack, the dancing there won’t go down after the Chaumière,—will it?”

“Not exactly,” replied Jack. “Wouldn’t Aimée’s waltzing make Mr. Baron Nathan stare?—wouldn’t it put him on his mettle?—and wouldn’t he try to cut her out in his Egg-shell and Tea-service Crackovienne, or his Chinese Fandango in scale-armour and hand-cuffs?”

“Purfleet,” observed Mr. Ledbury, as they proceeded, “is stated by the guides to be a quiet resort for invalids, unwilling to encounter the bustle of a large watering-place. There is sufficient gunpowder in the stores to produce an effect as far as London, if it exploded.”

“I have read so in the ‘Penny Hand-book for Travellers, and Coast Companion,’” said Johnson. “I suppose that accounts for the ‘rapid communication with all parts of Kent’

which Purfleet enjoys, according to the same authority."

"How very like old acquaintances all the names and signs look along the edge of the river!" remarked Ledbury.

"Very," returned Johnson; "and what a time it is since we have seen 'BARCLAY AND Co.'s ENTIRE' painted up! It beats the *Commerce des Vins* that we have left all to nothing. But, however, we must not abuse Paris, now we have come away from it."

"Certainly not," returned Ledbury. "I was very happy there, and saw quite enough to think about all my life afterwards. I wonder how they are all getting on."

This led their conversation back again to France, and they soon lost themselves in a chain of "don't you recollects?" which called up all their bygone adventures. But we will do them the justice to say, that when they looked round, and saw their own fine river, the mighty evidences of wealth and defiance that rode so proudly on its surface, and the tokens of commerce and enterprise that were crowded upon its banks, they agreed that old Thames took a deal of beating, and was a sight not to be despised, after all. And so, likewise, thought a great many of their foreign fellow-passengers, who, clustering round the fore part of the vessel, and presenting all those eccentric varieties of caps and cloaks, which

migratory continentalists love to indulge in, were uttering continuous expressions of admiration at the traffic of the river, and the "*mouvement perpetuel*" of the ships and steam-boats.

At last the packet came alongside the wharf; and, after much pulling and hauling, and many people being requested to stand out of the way, and more being thrust violently into side-cabins, and artfully contrived kitchens and cupboards in the paddle-boxes, where they remained in great trepidation and compulsory confinement for an indefinite period,—to say nothing of the anxiety of everybody to turn all the luggage topsy-turvy until their own effects were uppermost, and their acute mental agony at the chance of the custom-house officers seizing the bottle of brandy which they had brought from Boulogne with the cork out. After all this, the passengers were permitted to land between two rows of awe-inspiring men, who looked as suspiciously at everybody as if they were constructions of gloves, lace, Cognac, and jewellery, in the form of men and women. Mr. Ledbury walked ashore with two bottles of Eau de Cologne tucked into each of his boots, a packet of gloves in his hat, and Galignani's edition of Byron, very boldly carried under his arm; whilst Jack Johnson had so stuffed every available corner of his wardrobe with *tabac de régie*, that he looked like a locomotive pin-cushion, and, upon emergency, would have made

an excellent "fender," to let down with a rope over the side of the boat, and keep her from any damage by concussion against the landing-place!

"There's a pretty girl, Leddy!" exclaimed Johnson, as they gained the shore, and looked up at the people who were upon the platform of the wharf. "I think she knows us."

"It's my sister!" cried Ledbury, immediately falling into a continuous convulsion of nods and smiles; "and there is the *mater* with her! Come along, Jack!—I do want to see them so much!"

And, hurrying up the inclined boards of the floating-barge, which looked like the ribbed planks laid down for the horses in equestrian dramas, Mr. Ledbury pulled Jack Johnson after him, and soon reached the spot where his mother and sister stood, amidst a crowd of loiterers, who were shaking their handkerchiefs at the vessel, as if they were dusting it at a distance, or telegraphing to those of their friends who still remained on board.

"My mother—Mr. Johnson!" cried Ledbury, in breathless haste, as he introduced his friend. "Jack—my sister! How d'ye do?—and how are they all? How's the governor? You got the letter, then, all right? I thought you would come down."

And here Mr. Ledbury kissed his mother, who apparently expected he would do so, by

putting up her veil the minute she saw him land, and next he saluted his sister in the same manner; and then the two ladies bowed to Jack Johnson, and Jack bent his head, and inwardly agreed that he should not have minded kissing the old lady at all, she looked so kind; and was certain that he should even have been delighted to pay the same compliment to the young one. For, though he had been flirting sadly amongst the *belles* of Paris, he was not too obstinate to allow that the bright eyes, and clear rosy cheeks, and cherry-lips of our dear English girls, had in them something rather attractive than otherwise, even to travellers like himself.

“We are much indebted to you, sir,” said Mrs. Ledbury, turning to Jack, “for the attention you have shown to Titus;” for such was Mr. Ledbury’s Christian name,—we believe the first time the reader has been put in possession of the fact. “I hope, now you are returned, that we shall see something of you at Islington.”

“I will do myself the pleasure of calling, if not intruding,” replied Jack, who would have made a magnificent bow, only he was afraid some of the tobacco would tumble out of his hat.

“You are not quite a stranger to us, Mr. Johnson,” said Miss Ledbury. “We have heard so much of you and your achievements from my brother, that we almost know you intimately already!”

“ I fear he has told you little to my credit,” said Jack, smiling, and feeling as if he was blushing, which made him do so in earnest.

“ Oh ! indeed,” returned the young lady, “ we are very happy to make your acquaintance. Your care of my brother will insure you a welcome.”

Mr. Ledbury here informed his mother, that, as no other foreign boat had come in that day, there was a chance of getting their luggage through the custom-house that same afternoon, and that, therefore, he intended to wait. Whereupon Jack Johnson offered his services to procure a cab for the ladies ; and, after a great deal of rushing about in the mud of Thames Street, and several narrow escapes from being crushed to death between walls and waggon-wheels, he brought a chariot in triumph down to the wharf. Mrs. and Miss Ledbury then left, after many mutual courtesies and pleasant speeches, and charges to Titus to come up home directly his effects were cleared, and hopes that Jack Johnson would not be long before he came to see them.

As soon as they had departed, Jack turned to Ledbury, and, with a countenance beaming with enthusiasm, exclaimed,

“ The happy moment has at length arrived, which I have so long anticipated !”

“ I am very rejoiced to hear it,” replied Led-

bury, "if it gives you any satisfaction. What is the cause of your joy?"

"It is four calendar months," answered Johnson, "since these lips have known the taste of half-and-half; but we are once more in England, the land of the brave and free, and the bar to my happiness has given place to the bar of the nearest tavern—away!"

Jack Johnson here assumed the tone and bearing of a melo-dramatic performer at a minor theatre in the last act; and, pointing with his fore-finger towards a retail establishment, in the attitude of those energetic gentlemen who figure in shop-windows, at one penny plain, and two-pence coloured, he entered the shop, followed by Ledbury.

"Give *me* the goblet!" exclaimed Johnson, in the same theatrical tone, as he saw the barmaid was rather overdone by customers, at the same time seizing the pewter-pot,—"*give me* the goblet! The man who would not assist a female in distress is unworthy the name of Briton!"

And, applying himself vigorously to the handle of the beer-engine, he filled a quart of the looked-for beverage, and then buried his features in its foaming head.

"Ah!" he added, after a long pull at the contents, as he stopped for mere want of breath,

and passed the tankard to Ledbury, "*vin ordinaire*, at twelve sous a bottle, is very good; but if the French had cultivated hop-grounds, instead of vineyards, we should have had much more trouble in thrashing them at Waterloo! It would have come to the same thing in the end, but would have taken longer time, and stronger power, to accomplish."

Their luggage was cleared that afternoon, nothing particularly contraband attracting the attention of the custom-house officers. The only things they looked suspiciously at were six or seven pairs of new boots, which Jack Johnson had given a little boy at Boulogne half a franc to wear, one after another, and run about in the mud with all day, to make them look old. But Jack contrived, by dint of equal exhibitions of chaff and persuasion, to get them passed; and then, for the first time since they left England, the two friends parted; Mr. Ledbury flying to the bosom of his family at Islington in a patent cab, and Jack Johnson leaving his packages until he sent a man for them with a truck.

"It seems odd, old fellow," said Jack, as they shook hands, "to say good-b'ye, after having been so long together. However, Leddy, I shall come up and see you before the week is out. Who knows but we may have many more adventures yet?—So keep your powder dry upon the strength of it."



## CHAPTER XIII.

## A FEW PARTICULARS CONCERNING MR. LEDBURY'S FAMILY.

It was some little time before the domestic circle, of which Mr. Ledbury formed an arc, had quite recovered from the excitement consequent upon his return; or ceased to listen, with astonished eyes and ears, to his entertaining narratives of what he had witnessed abroad.

His relatives were rather proud of his adventures, and looked upon him as a traveller of no ordinary enterprise. Indeed, on the first Sunday after his return, when the period arrived that he had looked forward to so eagerly, and he walked down High Street, in the afternoon, dressed in a complete suit of Parisian clothes, he almost occasioned a dispute. For the juvenile portion of his family were so anxious to secure his arm, that they came to a downright struggle, in their desire to show the natives of the district—most of whom, it is believed, being a domestic and unambitious people, look upon France with the same indefinite

notions of its customs and position, as if it was Nova Scotia or the Panjab—how very intimate they were, and upon what familiar terms they stood, with so celebrated a voyager.

Mr. Ledbury had the honour of being at the head of his brothers and sisters; Emma came next to him, in point of seniority; and then there were three or four miniature Ledburys, of various ages and sizes, who peopled the upper part of the house during the week, and were allowed on Sunday to dine in the parlour, and pledge their parents in dolls' wine-glasses of fifteen-penny Cape,—provided always that the nurse furnished a creditable report of their behaviour in the tub on the previous evening, which was sometimes exceedingly reckless and uncontrollable.

Master Walter Ledbury, an urchin of five years old, was a perfect infantile revolutionist; a sad little boy, indeed, whom no domestic severity could intimidate. He had been known to make faces at the nurse, and tell her that she was too ugly for him to mind. And his perseverance in catching that most hapless of all tormented animals, the nursery kitten, was as remarkable as it was eventually successful,—only equalled by the rapidity with which he dressed it in the doll's night-gown, whilst Foster had gone down to the kitchen for some hot water; and then, with the

assistance of his senior sister, Ellen, gave it several successive dips in the tin-bath, after the manner of the women they had seen at Margate. None of the dolls themselves ever escaped this ordeal, or retained their eyes, five minutes after he got hold of them; and his intense love of cleanliness induced him to wash all the toys he could lay his hands upon, until their colours were reduced to one general neutral tint. He filled up all the key-holes with the monkeys who held the apples from the Noah's Ark; and was never so happy as when he was trying to swim the cocks and hens belonging to the same establishment in his milk and water; or clandestinely giving the baby, Japhet and his wife, that the black paint might be sucked off their round hats, and the infant's upper lip ornamented with chocolate mustachios from their gaberdines.

Perhaps, if any one person in the family could manage the juvenile insurgents better than another, it was Emma Ledbury. In the event of a nursery *émeute*, she was always the peace-maker. And a sweet, gentle girl she was too,—as pretty as she was good, and as clever as she was pretty. She knew how to make all sorts of useful things, not trashy, fiddle-faddle fancy-work, but really serviceable domestic contrivances. Not but that she could very readily have embroidered a Berlin-wool chair-cover, or made a perforated-card sticking-plaster case, if she had chosen to give her

time to it; but she entertained a strange antediluvian opinion, that the same proportion of industry, differently applied, might produce results of ten times greater utility. And she could have made a cloak for herself, in the last and prettiest fashion, in less time than the young lady who had lent her the pattern would take to finish an orientally-tinted Chinese cockatoo on an embossed fire-screen, or completed a set of nothing-holders for the mantelpiece,—all straws, card-board, and blue ribbon.

Emma Ledbury was now seventeen; but she possessed more good sense and information than many young ladies of seven-and-twenty,—if, indeed, young ladies will allow that there is such an age. She had not one attribute in common with our friend, her brother Titus, except his unvarying good-temper and kind-heartedness; nevertheless they agreed remarkably well, and he entertained the highest notion of everything she did or advised. Her features were interesting and expressive; and, although not regularly perfect, far more attractive in their *ensemble* than those of the inanimate dolls to which the world so frequently assigns the epithet of “beautiful,”—the originals of the lithographed divinities who stare, or languish at us from the title-pages of songs in the windows of fancy-stationers. Her eyes were dark and intelligent, and her soft glossy hair was braided over her smooth forehead,

neither papered into corkscrews, nor vulgarized into plaits.

Mr. Ledbury senior, was the chief partner of a first-rate London house, the offices of which were situated in the centre of one of those intricate ramifications of bricks, mortar, and dirty windows, which are to be found in various corners of the city; and are approached by artful alleys and cleverly-concealed courts, known only to the tax-collectors, sweeps, and *employés* of the establishment. By dint of prudent economy, a few lucky speculations, and a very handsome share of the business, he had built up the edifice of his fortune bit by bit, and then perched himself comfortably on the top. But he still paid the same unwearied attention to the duties of his firm; more, however, now, from long habit, than any real necessity which existed for such close application. The identical omnibus-cad, who had ridden behind the vehicle ever since it first started, never shouted out “Now, *sir!*” as it drew up to the door. He knew Mr. Ledbury would be ready, or, if the conveyance was two minutes after its time, that he had walked on; and his return in the afternoon was so punctual, that the neighbours regarded him as an animated chronometer, by which they arranged their clocks and watches. He had never been out of England, and very rarely out of London. He thought the

neighbourhood of the Bank the only spot where a person could breathe a pure wholesome air; and looked upon the country as a useful place for growing vegetables, nursing children, and feeding sheep, in order that they might supply the unequalled chops, one of which he was in the habit of taking for lunch, direct from the gridiron, at a venerable sawdusted tavern, approached by a species of horizontal chimney, which perforated the lower part of one of the houses in a bustling thoroughfare.

A few days after our hero's return, he was one evening, as usual, giving a long account of what he had witnessed, and much more of what he had not, to his mother and sister; who, having completed a long debate upon the practicability of cutting down one of Emma's dresses into a frock for little Ellen, were now making paper patterns of curious shapes and figures, which gave rise to much surmise in the mind of the spectator, as to what portion of the dress they could possibly be intended for. Mr. Ledbury senior, was reading the city article in the paper, occasionally indulging in a parenthetical commentary of a most uncomplimentary nature upon France and the French,—regarding the latter as a species of educated apes, who did nothing but dance, eat nothing but frogs, manufactured nothing but sugar-plums, and whose general appearance re-

sembled the foreigners he had seen in pantomimes and penny caricatures.

At length, Titus having come to the end of one adventure, and not being able, at the instant, to recollect or invent another, there was a pause of a few minutes in the conversation. Mrs. Ledbury looked at Emma with an expression of interrogation, and Emma telegraphed a nod of assent in return; and then Mr. Titus Ledbury elevated his eyebrows in inquiry as he gazed at his mother and sister, previously to nodding his head sideways towards the old gentleman; from all which gesture it appeared, taking these mysterious signals one with another, that some dark conspiracy was being formed in the family, of which Mr. Ledbury senior, was entirely ignorant, although he was certainly intended for the victim. At last Mrs. Ledbury cut out a pattern in a desperate manner from the advertisement half of the day-before-yesterday's newspapers, and then taking off her spectacles, folded them up gravely, and placed them upon the table, as, after a slight preparatory "hem!" apparently to raise her courage, she said to her husband,—

"My dear, we wish to consult you about a little affair we have in contemplation."

And then she looked at Emma and Mr. Ledbury, (by whom we mean our friend the adventurer—he not being confounded with Mr. Led-

bury senior,) as much as to say "I wonder whether he will agree to it."

"Well, my love," replied the Ledbury père, "what is it?"

"We have been thinking," said Mrs. Ledbury, with hesitation, but endeavouring to make it appear a subject of mere common-place interest, which she did not care about one way or the other—"we have been thinking that—we ought—that we ought, I say, to give an evening party."

"Um! I don't see the absolute necessity for such a proceeding," replied her husband.

"But why not, Mr. Ledbury?"

"Well, I don't exactly know," was the answer; "but there are fifty things against it."

"Perhaps you will mention one of the fifty, my dear," observed Mrs. Ledbury, looking significantly at Emma, and intending to express the words, "I think I have him there."

"Oh!" returned Mr. Ledbury senior, "it knocks the house about so. Besides, our accommodations are not extensive enough. How can you cram an hundred people into our drawing-rooms? You women think houses are made of India-rubber that will stretch to anything."

"My dear papa!" said Emma, "only look at last year; we had more than that number, and everybody was so much pleased, and so very comfortable!"

"Why, Emmy, what are you talking about?"



exclaimed her father ; “ there was a perfect mob ! Mrs. Hoddle never got further than the landing, and I was blockaded into the window-seat of the back drawing-room at ten o’clock ; and couldn’t get out until the first lot went down to supper.”

“ And yet they enjoyed themselves,” observed Titus mildly.

“ Pshaw !” retorted the governor. “ What possible enjoyment can people find in kicking their heels about at a time when they ought to be in bed and asleep ?”

“ Well, my love,” said Mrs. Ledbury softly, and trying to go upon another tack ; “ no doubt the young people think differently. Besides, we *must* keep our connexion together,”

“ Very true, Mrs. Ledbury,” answered the old gentleman ; “ but, your chief idea of connexion is a parcel of people nobody cares anything about, who wear out the knockers, trouble the servants, wipe their shoes upon the carpets, cut up the gravel before the door, and fill the card-basket. Yah ! you never ask any of my real business-connexion.”

“ They are such very odd people, sir,” said Titus ; “ who know nothing of Paris. It is so strange to visit them.”

“ You would find it much stranger if they were to turn their backs upon us,” replied Mr. Ledbury senior. “ Now, I don’t mind dinner-parties ; you may have one as often as you like.”

“But, papa,” said Emma, “we find so little amusement in your dinner-parties; and I am certain they are more expensive.”

“And only entertain such a few people!” said Titus.

“And the wine they drink would make all the negus,” added Mrs. Ledbury. “Besides, it need not be so good, if you put plenty of nutmeg; and see how the hot-water and little custard-cups help it out!”

Mr. Ledbury senior, indulged in a faint groan of resignation.

“And they involve so much anxiety and awkward mistakes,” continued Mrs. Ledbury, following up the attack. “At the very last dinner we gave, Hipkins took round brandy-sauce for the turbot, and kept back the oysters for the plum-pudding. Mrs. Claverly took some—of course—because we wanted her to have everything as good as it could be.”

“And you will not learn the names of the dishes, my dear papa,” said Emma. “When old Mrs. Hoddle asked for some of the *fondue*, you sent Hipkins with the mashed potatoes!”

“If you have made up your minds to this discomfort,” interrupted Mr. Ledbury senior, quite overcome, and wishing to raise the siege, “why, of course, it is no use endeavouring to make you think differently.”

“Then you give us leave!” exclaimed all three of his companions at once.

“Well,” said the old gentleman, with great deliberation,—“well!—I give you leave: in fact, I must make a virtue of necessity. Only don’t tell me when it’s going to be; or, the mere anticipation will fidget me for a week beforehand.”

“We’ll keep it quite a secret, papa,” said Emma.

“Or, upon second thoughts, I think you had better let me know,” resumed Mr. Ledbury senior; “because then I will make arrangements to go out for the evening.”

The point was gained, much to the satisfaction of the young people; and the family then relapsed into their own reflections. Mr. Ledbury junior, began to calculate upon the effect his French scarf and boots would produce; and was almost sorry he had not got his *débardeur’s* dress; Mrs. Ledbury had already laid out the supper in imagination; the old gentleman went back to his city article in the newspaper; and Emma was lost in a mental inquiry as to whether there was time for her to have her lilac *challis* dyed crimson, which, with short sleeves, and *blonde* falls, would look very well and seasonable, considering the time of the year.

## CHAPTER XIV.

JACK JOHNSON HAS AN INTERVIEW WITH A RELATIVE.

AMIDST the wilderness of houses that are crowded together between St. Giles's church and Long-acre, there is a labyrinth of streets, which a man may spend his whole existence in threading, doubling, and running about, before he can determine in any degree whither they lead, how they are bounded, or in what aspect their various thoroughfares run. A confused mass of second-hand sale-cellars, breweries, gin-shops, old iron-stores, potatoe-sheds, and eating-houses, whose windows display cooked meat of the most repulsive and coarsest kind, form the chief characteristics of the locality: and the inhabitants are equally squalid, smoke-dried, and poverty-stricken, with their abodes. A polluted and steaming atmosphere, like a pall of clouds, laden with noisome fumes and dense vapours from the contiguous furnaces, hangs over these regions by day: and by night they are illumined by flaring jets of gas from the different sheds, casting their fitful and intermittent

light over the cold fried fish, lumps of coal, and bundles of firewood, there exposed for sale. The only signs of wealth in this dreary neighbourhood are found in the costly gin-shops,—wealth, which is obtained by fiery aquafortis, that extracts the metal from the clods of earth which it destroys. Beneath the windows of these gaudy establishments, women, in their worst and most degraded nature, are collected, huddling together in little knots of two and three, all vociferously declaiming in the hoarse, thickened accents of disease and intoxication, without cap or bonnet—a rough, dirty shawl only pulled over their shoulders; and men of sinister aspect are loitering about the corners of every court, leaning against posts, or quarrelling, in a harsh and unintelligible language. Wretched children, too, swarm in every direction; but they are not like children. The countenances—even of the dirty and uncared-for infants—betoken low and precocious cunning; and they creep along under the shade of the walls and buildings, or crouch in low, narrow alleys, with the fear of light and publicity, which early crime, coupled with the dread of its detection, has rendered habitual.

It was through this maze of want and depravity that Jack Johnson was following an ill-clad urchin, who appeared to act as his guide, on the very evening of his arrival in London. He had found a large collection of letters when he return-

ed to his old lodgings, that had arrived in his absence ; and one amongst them, delivered only the day before, had led to his present journey. That it was important might be assumed from the hurry in which he started from home ; and, as he carried the note with him 'to ascertain the address, he crumpled it in his hand with nervous anxiety, until it was almost illegible.

After traversing several streets, the boy, at length, stopped before a cellar, the mouth of which was garnished with several common theatrical properties, such as iron combat-swords with basket-handles, scraps of worn and tarnished gold-lace, and patched russet-boots, all intended to captivate the eye, and ease the pocket, of some aspiring supernumerary, or hunter after the histrionic fame of a private theatre.

“ Take care o’ yer head,” said the boy as they descended—a caution which was certainly necessary. “ You’d best turn your face to the steps, and then you won’t fall.”

Acting upon his advice, Johnson turned round, and, carefully watching each of his feet as he placed it on the rickety stair, lowered himself through the smoke that poured up the outlet in dense volumes, and at length found himself in a St. Giles’s cellar.

The miserable den into which he descended was about twelve feet square, and not above seven from the ground to the ceiling—if the bare joists

and rafters deserved that name. There were two or three doorways that led into recesses still more limited and filthy, in which he could just discern through the smoke which filled them, figures moving about in every direction. Walls, floor, ceiling, and fixtures, were all of one uniform cloudy black; and the inmates partook of the same hue. The principal occupier of the front cellar was a cobbler, who was plying his calling at the bottom of the steps, to benefit by the gas-light of the shop overhead; and various new-footed boots and shoes, at prices scarcely above the value of the old leather—vamped and polished to the last pitch of ingenuity—were ranged in such pairs as could be selected from them, on a ledge of rough board, amidst the theatrical properties before spoken of. The walls were covered with what had apparently been cheap caricatures, and execution-bills, but now illegible, and almost invisible, from dirt. A wretched, featherless bird, hopped from one perch to another, in a patched-up cage that depended from one of the rafters; and some melancholy rabbits were penned up in a corner of the room by an old shutter; whilst several helpless children—untaught as animals, without their cleanliness or instinct—were crying on the floor, or crawling through the doorways from one cellar to another. What the floor itself was made of it was impossible to distinguish; but from its irregularity, it appeared

paved : and, in one part, where the drip from a leaky cistern-pipe kept it constantly moist, three or four seeds, which the bird had fluttered from his cage, had taken root in the dirt, and were struggling to push their two small dusky leaflets into existence. In the other rooms were some individuals—whether men or women it was difficult at first to determine, making shell-pincushions, halfpenny dancing-figures, dolls'-saucepans, and other articles, which may be daily seen selling for a small price in the streets ; and the whole range was pervaded by a stench of frying, smoking, and the fumes of gin, that was quite intolerable upon first entering.

It would seem that the inmates of the cellar had some idea upon what business their visitor had come. The proprietor looked rather suspiciously over his horn-spectacles as he descended ; but, when he saw clearly who it was, he laid down his work, and, turning a cat without ears or tail, in a very unceremonious manner, from the chair on which it was seated, offered the accommodation thus procured to the new comer.

“ Thank you ! no,” returned Johnson ; “ I have merely come here upon a little business in consequence of this note. Do not let me disturb you.”

“ You ain't a blue lion,” said a man who stood by, fixing an inquiring glance upon Johnson ; “ nor—a dragon ?”



“ Indeed—no,” replied the other, not having the most remote idea what these zoological terms implied. “ I have to see some one here, it appears ; but you need not fear anything. Where is the person who sent this note ?”

The appearance of a well-dressed young man in the cellar, had attracted the attention of the other inmates ; and they now forsook their different employments, and clustered about him, exclaiming :—

“ Here, sir !—this way !—I ’ll show you !”

And this was uttered with an eager anxiety, that could only have been produced by a reward in perspective.

“ Now, keep back ! there’s good people !” said Johnson, as they crowded round him ; “ one will be sufficient. *You* know what I have come about, and will direct me,” he continued, addressing the cobbler.

The man immediately rose ; and, motioning the others to stand out of the way, with an air of temporary importance, derived from the choice made of his services, led Johnson through one of the door-ways, and, passing a series of low, vaulted recesses, that looked like a *suite* of wine-cellars without doors or bottles, stopped at one of the most remote. He here lifted aside a dirty patchwork curtain, that was nailed before the entrance, and allowed the other to pass in.

On a miserable bed, which nearly occupied

the entire space of the cellar, constructed of a dilapidated frame of packing-cloth, placed upon four oyster-tubs ; and, covered only by a few old sacks, sewed roughly together, lay the writer of the epistle which had brought Johnson to the present scene. He was a young man, about seven-and-twenty years old, apparently tall, and well-featured ; but his flesh was wasted and his eyes sunk, and preternaturally brilliant. A florid patch upon his cheeks, in striking contrast to his pale countenance, would have offered sufficient evidence of the relentless disease that revelled within with uncontrollable progress, even in the absence of the distressing cough and quick, laboured respiration, which rendered any lengthened speech a matter of painful difficulty. He raised himself slowly up as Johnson entered ; and, when the guide left them alone, held out his delicate hand, accompanied by a few faint words of recognition to his cousin — for such was the relationship between the two parties, — as he approached. Seating himself on the bed, by the side of the other, Johnson took the wasted fingers in his grasp, and then looked at him for a minute, with a gaze of mingled surprise and sorrow, ere he exclaimed,

“ Morris ! what has happened that you have come to this ? ”

“ I am afraid it ’s all up ! ” replied the other,

resting between every two words for a fresh inspiration. "I baulked them, though, with all their vigilance: they have not caught me yet."

"For God's sake! tell me what you have been doing," said Johnson earnestly. "I thought I left you comfortably settled at the bank. You have been turned away?"

"No — no!" returned his cousin, — "I was not turned away, — I left on my own account. They would be glad to see me again; but they won't."

"But this wretched den? — this miserable, poverty-stricken —"

"Poverty!" interrupted Morris, with an attempt at a smile, — "poverty; you are mistaken there."

And, having looked suspiciously around, by the light of the dim candle, that flickered in a clay candlestick at the head of the bed, he drew forth a small dirty, cloth parcel, from under his pillow, which he unpinned, and showed his cousin a number of sovereigns concealed in its folds. Johnson uttered an exclamation of surprise as he saw the gold.

"Hush!" exclaimed Morris, in a low voice, — "hush! they don't know of it—the people in the house: they would murder me to possess it, if they did. Who could tell whether one of the inmates lived or died in this lonely cellar? I

might lie here, and rot—rot like a cur, for aught the police knew. But the seclusion is my safety.”

“I see it all,” said Johnson, as the truth broke upon him. “You have embezzled the property of your employers, and have sought a refuge in this dreary place from their pursuit.”

“You have hit it, Jack,” returned the other, with callous indifference; “I wanted money, and I took it. They stopped the notes; but I got some changed before the numbers were advertised. And they watched for me at all the ports, thinking I should go abroad, when I was close to them all the time!” And he attempted to laugh as he uttered these last words; but the endeavour was checked by a long fit of coughing, which sounded as if it was tearing his lungs to pieces. Johnson supported him in the bed during the paroxysm; but, when it was over, he fell back on the mass of rags which formed his pillow, perfectly exhausted.

“It’s—it’s only—a cold!” he articulated, after a short pause, as he saw Johnson watching him, with a countenance of the deepest commiseration; “only a slight cold. I’m subject to it, you know; but, I’m a great deal better—than I was.”

“It is more than a cold, Morris,” said Johnson, taking his hand. “I know enough of surgery to feel your pulse. See!” he continued, as

he counted the time by his watch ; " thirty in a quarter of a minute ! A cold would not raise it to this."

" It is a cold, I tell you !" answered his cousin, apparently annoyed at having his word doubted. " I caught it in the wet streets, and outbuildings, where I slept, almost out of doors, before I came here. I shall get better soon. I know it is only a cold."

" Well," continued Johnson, unwilling to contradict him, " I dare say it is. But now, Morris, of what service can I be to you ? I do not see clearly what you would have me do."

" You must take care of that money for me, Jack," answered the other.

" But it is plunder !" said Johnson. " I will return it, if you will give it to me."

" Return it ! — You have grown punctilious lately," remarked Morris, ironically.

" No ; I have not, Morris," replied Johnson. " Careless, noisy, and—dissipated, if you choose to call it so, I may be ; but I am not yet criminal. If you give me that money, I shall restore it to the people you took it from."

" And leave me to starve ?"

" I do not think that is very likely. I have kicked down a great deal more of my income than perhaps I ought to have done in Paris during the last autumn ; but I can, at least, keep you from starving."

"I shall not burthen you long with any expense," continued Morris, still speaking in a half-satirical, half-earnest tone. "If they find me, they will hang me out of your way; or, they will give up looking after me, and then I shall go. I don't know where; but I shall go away—perhaps a great distance off; for my cold will have got better then, and I shall be strong."

"You will give me the money, then?" said Johnson, endeavouring to lead up to a reply in the affirmative.

"If you will keep it for me—certainly," was the answer. "But, if you are going to give it back, it shall remain here until *they* find it out;" and he pointed in the direction where some of the voices of the other inmates were audible. "They will murder me then, and be the only ones to enjoy it."

A few minutes of silence on either side, succeeded to the last speech, broken only by Morris's harassing cough, which continued almost without intermission. At length Johnson was the first to speak, as follows:—

"Now, listen, Morris: if you will not let me have this money to return, let me keep it in charge for you. I need not say that it will be sacred; and, what little you may require, until you think it advisable to leave this dreadful place, I will endeavour to supply you with."

"You have scarcely got enough to support yourself," replied the other coldly; "how can you afford to keep me?"

"We will not argue upon that score," returned Johnson; "leave it to me, and I will do my best. Do you agree to this?"

Morris hesitated for an instant, and then replied,

"I can do nothing else. Here—take it; but keep it carefully. I know how much there is."

"You need not be in fear that I shall touch a doit," said Johnson angrily. "Do you want anything else?"

"Yes; leave me some silver, if you have it. I do not like trusting them with gold when they go out for me,—they would not bring it back."

Johnson immediately gave him what loose change he could spare; and, in return, received the gold.

"I shall see you before long?" asked his cousin, as he rose to depart.

"You may depend upon my coming shortly," replied Johnson. "In the meanwhile, think over what I have suggested to you. Your secret rests with me; and you will, I am sure, see the advantage of acting as I have advised, if you are not yet quite lost."

"You had better take the candle with you," observed Morris heedlessly, pretending not to hear the last sentence. "They need not bring

it back just yet. I am tired ; and shall go to sleep. Good night !”

And he turned round to his pillow as Johnson left him wondering at the hardened indifference that allowed his cousin to sleep so readily under such circumstances, and in such a dismal chamber.

“How is the neighbour, docther?” asked a woman, in a strong Hibernian accent, as our friend regained the front cellar.

Johnson’s tact enabled him directly to perceive in what light he was regarded by the inmates of the Cimmerian regions, in which he was at present located ; and he directly returned some commonplace, but apparently professional answer.

“It pours o’ rain, master,” observed the cobbler, who, having removed his stock from the entrance of the cellar, had pulled down the trap-door, given up work, and was enjoying a pipe by the hob of a very smoky fire. “It’s a back’ards and for’ards, up and down sort of rain, as won’t last long.”

“I’ll stay here for a few minutes, then, until it leaves off,” said Johnson.

“Why don’t you give the docther the seat?” exclaimed the Irishwoman, knocking a small boy off a stool, upon which he was perched, into the centre of a heap of rubbish, from which he did not re-appear during the sojourn of the visitor.

As Johnson accepted the proffered accommo-



dation, a sound arose from a corner of the room in a simultaneous burst of discordancy, that directly drew his attention to the spot from whence it proceeded. A row of dirty children, five or six in number, of ages varying from three to thirteen, were standing with their backs against the wall; and a man in front of them, with some piece of machinery fixed on the end of a pole, was apparently directing their vocal efforts.

“Hope you’re well, sir!” said he, as Johnson approached, in a voice that had an equal dash of the knave and fool in it, but belonged completely to neither.

“Pray don’t let me disturb you,” replied Johnson. “I am curious to see what you are about.”

“I’m a street professor, sir, of misery for the million. This, sir, is a model of a loom.”

And pointing to the machine on the top of his staff, which looked something like the skeleton of a cabinet piano fixed to the end of a four-post bedstead, he pulled a string attached to it, whereby various bits of the apparatus were set in motion, shooting in and out, moving up and down, and performing various intricate evolutions, very curious to behold.

“This is the comb, there is the treadles, and that ’ere little thing’s the shuttle. Now, the children looks at these, and when the treadles move they sings a hymn—just listen, sir.”

And as he pulled the string the children set up a miserable wail that would have been certain to have procured them a commission by purchase to some station in the next street.

At a signal they all stopped; and the man again addressed Johnson.

“Now, sir, you’ll see how I guides them in the bits. Attention.”

Whereupon the children, directed apparently by the motions of the loom, commenced bawling out at the top of their voices,

“We have not tasted food for three days (*pause*). Our mother died when we were infants (*pause*). Pity the distress of an industrious family.”

“Now comes my solo,” resumed the man, producing a rapid motion of every part of the loom at once, which checked the children’s voices. He then continued, in a solemn, measured tone, “My Christian friends, I am ashamed to be seen in such a situation. I am a native of Stockport, in Lancashire. I have been out of work for twelve months. The smallest sum will be gratefully acknowledged by an industrious family of smaller children.—Then, sir,” he continued, suddenly changing his voice, and addressing Johnson,—“then, sir, we looks miserable; and, if nobody comes to the windows, we starts the hymn again. That’s sure to bring ’em out.”

“And you find this answer?” asked Jack.

“Uncommon, sir,” replied the man; “only it’s dry work teaching. P’rhaps yer honour would let us drink your health?”

“There’s a shilling for you,” said Johnson; “it’s all the change I have left.”

“Thank’ee, sir!” returned the man. “I hope yer honour won’t split, ’cos it’s a profitable line, and it ’ud be a pity to have it spiled.”

“Oh, no!” answered Johnson, smiling, “you may depend upon my secrecy.”

The cobbler here informed him that the rain had left off; so Johnson took advantage of the change, and saluting the inmates of the cellar, clambered up the steps, and thoughtfully retraced his way home.

And when he retired to bed his rest was broken and unrefreshing, for he thought of his cousin, and the serious matter in which he himself was innocently involved; again picturing the wretched scene he had witnessed, and passing all the events of the day in wearying review through his brain, the only pleasant vision being the face of Emma Ledbury as he had seen her for the few minutes, whose sunny face and bright eyes ever and anon beamed through the dreary visions he had conjured up in his imagination.

## CHAPTER XV.

OF THE GRAND BALL GIVEN BY MR. LEDBURY'S FRIENDS  
TO CELEBRATE HIS RETURN TO HIS NATIVE LAND.

As soon as the conspirators of the Ledbury family had gained their point, the guests were put down, and their invitations sent out—after much discussion as to who should have the French note-paper, who the lace-work envelopes, whose notes it would not do to stick a penny Queen's head upon, and whose could be sent by post, with many other serious matters of consideration. But all this was done with a comparative rapidity beyond conception, for fear Mr. Ledbury senior, should change his mind, and think that a dinner-party to eight or ten of his own peculiar friends would be better after all. The intervening time passed quickly by in planning, ordering, and canvassing different arrangements, and at length the eventful day arrived.

The early Islington cock had thrice crowed salutation to the morning fog, as the breakfast things were cleared away from the parlour, and the boy in waiting, who sported a calico-jacket in

the morning, and a firmament of buttons in the afternoon, rubbed the table with a highly-magnified small-tooth-comb-brush, to take out the light marks which the hot saucers had left behind. Old Ledbury, foreseeing a domestic tempest, took his departure for the city with unusual alacrity,—indeed, he was ten minutes before the omnibus. Not that his business that morning was of extra importance, but he wanted to fly from the approaching confusion. And if he had not luckily possessed his counting-house as a place of refuge, he would have ridden backwards and forwards all day long, from the Bank to Lisson Grove, from mere dread of returning home. No sooner had he gone than the first note of preparation was sounded by Mrs. Ledbury calling for a candle, and then, accompanied by Titus, plunging into the cellar to see how the *blanc-manger* and jelly looked,—the latter of which delicacies had been strained through an inverted flannel fool's-cap the night before,—and to bring up the wine. The inspection proved satisfactory; and, by the time Emma had filled all the pint decanters, some with sherry, and others with marsala, (intended to pass muster in the confusion of supper,) and Mrs. Ledbury had mislaid the keys four times, and Master Walter Ledbury had twice ventured down from the nursery, in the absence of Foster, and been twice violently carried back again, after pulling off two or three of the oranges which Titus

had tied to some laurel-branches in a small conservatory on the first-floor landing: by the time all these things were accomplished, a cart stopped at the door, loaded with long spars of wood, striped canvass, and tressels, on the top of all of which was perched Jack Johnson. A crowd of little boys followed him, who, imagining it was a travelling exhibition, cheered vociferously as the vehicle stopped at the door, and redoubled their greetings when Mr. Ledbury appeared at the window and nodded to his friend.

In the short period that had elapsed since the tourists returned from France, Jack had called several times at Ledbury's house, and was now looked upon as the most intimate of their friends. This will account for his appearance at Islington so early on the day of the party,—a time when people are generally not at home to anybody, except those actually engaged in the preparations for the evening's festivity. But now his services had actually been solicited by all the family, to assist them in constructing a temporary apartment. Mrs. Ledbury had originally intended to devote her own bed-room to the supper-tables; but the bare hint of such a proceeding met with so decided a negative from Mr. Ledbury senior, that she saw the plan must at once be abandoned,—the old gentleman not entering into the ideas of fun and convenience, which everybody else appeared to see in such a transformation. Then the nur-

sery was talked about for the same purpose, and alike discarded, no domestic ingenuity being able to contrive another bivouac for the infantry therein abiding; and they were almost giving the whole affair up in despair, when Jack Johnson, who chanced to be present at one of the discussions, suggested to Titus the practicability of covering in the garden,—which was a narrow slip between two walls,—and thus procuring a very roomy apartment, to be entered from the French windows of the back drawing-room. The proposal was immediately decided upon; and Jack undertook to superintend the whole of the architectural proceedings, relying upon the co-operation of a friend,—a gentleman in highlows, who kept stables at the races, and who promised to procure the requisite poles and tarpaulins from certain of his connexions in the Crown-and-anchor line, who provided canvass *salons* for the votaries of Terpsichore at various fairs and merrymakings about the country; and with this cargo, accompanied by the man, Jack now arrived.

A little confusion occurred in unloading the cart; but, after Mrs. Ledbury had requested the man five separate times to rub his shoes as he went through the “hall,”—a portion of the mansions of England in the olden time, formerly known as the “passage,”—and the little boys, still holding to the belief that a show was about to be erected, (the more so as they saw a yellow balloon for illu-

mination lamps come out of the cart,) had boldly advanced to the very door, from which Mr. Ledbury gallantly drove them back with an umbrella; —after these little events, the whole apparatus was safely collected in the garden. And then Jack Johnson, in company with his friend in the highlows, who was commonly known as “Spriggy Smithers,” assisted by the baker’s boy, who brought the rolls for the sandwiches, and was forcibly detained, and pressed into the service, all went to work together, and laboured so well, that by one o’clock the whole of the framework was in order, when the baker’s boy was sent home with a shilling, and a tin of patties, and Jack and Spriggy, with that absence of all discomfort from difference of position attending true good breeding, refreshed themselves with a bottle of stout which Mrs. Ledbury sent out to them, and discussed some sandwiches, made from the unrepresentable terminations of the above-mentioned rolls, and certain anomalous dabs of ham; but which were, nevertheless, very acceptable, and especially so to Jack, for Emma brought them herself. Titus, to be sure, was of no very great assistance, as far as hard work went; but, he stood upon a tub, and handed up the tacks and pincers when wanted, or entertained them with humorous anecdotes, and diverting snatches of melody, so that they were glad of his company; and Mrs.



Ledbury was not sorry to get him out of the house ; where, truth to tell, he was rather in the way, after all the decorating arrangements entrusted to his taste were finished. With this co-operation they covered in the tent with canvass, and then proceeded to arrange the tables underneath ; feeling some comfort at being concealed from the gaze of the neighbours ; for all the back-windows of the contiguous houses had their full complement of spectators, who were intently watching the construction. And, when the supper itself began to appear, and the glass-cups had been filled with custard, Master Walter Ledbury, who had behaved with unparalleled propriety for two hours, never leaving the nursery, was allowed to come into the kitchen, and clean the interior of the stew-pan after his own fashion, with a large piece of bread in his hand, and an enormous pinafore tied under his chin, until he made himself quite as poorly as the fondest and most indulgent parent could desire.

“ My dears ! ” said Mrs. Ledbury to Titus and Emma, who, under her direction, were writing the names of various delicious comestibles upon slips of paper, and placing them in the dishes intended for their reception ; “ my dears ! you must endeavour, when supper-time comes, to put Mrs. Claverly as near the trifle-basket as you can. I particularly wish her to see it.”

“I’ll look out,” replied Ledbury, writing “anchovy sand” on a piece of paper, and putting it in a small dish.

“And at the same time, get old Mrs. Hoddle away from it, or she will be sure to be telling its history to all the table, and how much it cost : she was in the shop when I bought it.”

“If you will give me a hint when the time arrives,” said Jack, “I will light up the balloon. It will come out uncommonly grand, if my plan answers.”

“And, pray, what clever contrivance have you got to astonish our guests with, Mr. Johnson?” asked Emma Ledbury.

“Why, you must not say anything,” replied Jack, confidentially; “but I have hung the balloon to the bottle-jack, so that when I wind it up, it will keep turning round.”

And here everybody expressed their admiration at Jack’s ingenious application of domestic machinery to the purposes of social enjoyment; and were astonished to see how very cleverly he had contrived to conceal the bottle-jack in a large tassel of coloured paper, fringed at the edges.

“How it will puzzle the company to find out how it is done!” observed Mr. Ledbury.

“Now, don’t go telling the people all about it, Titus,” said Emma; “as you did last year,

when Brown lent us the Chinese lamps out of the shop-windows to put in the conservatory."

"I shall be studiously secret on this point," replied her brother.

"The only thing that could betray it to a keen observer," said Jack Johnson, "is this: If any one listens attentively, he will hear a 'click' every half minute, or so; and then it will turn the other way."

But they all agreed there was not much chance of this; for people at supper were usually occupied in assisting, or being assisted; and, as it was rather a noisy period of the evening's festivities, they were not very likely to detect the contrivance.

It was evening before the preparations were completed; and then Jack Johnson took his departure, with all sorts of expressions of gratitude from the family, promising to return as soon as his ball-toilet was made to his satisfaction. Mr. Ledbury vanished to his own room, where he laid all his French clothes in great state upon the bed, and then spent half an hour in admiring them: and Mrs. Ledbury and Emma contrived, about eight o'clock, to procure some coffee from the nursery tea-things—it not being thought advisable to disturb the order of the China service, which was awaiting the guests in the parlour. And the old gentleman had not returned from

the city ; but was presumed to be spending the evening in a retired tavern in the city,—so quiet a place, that the very clock appeared afraid to tick, and vibrated with a grave and subdued beat, which endowed it with an air of tranquil respectability, perfectly in accordance with the usual frequenters of the house.

Johnson had resolved, for this day and evening, at least, to cast all his care and troubles to the winds ; and, true to his promise, returned to Ledbury's at an early hour. Indeed, Titus had not completed his toilet when his friend arrived ; so Jack bounded upstairs to his room, and superintended the finish of his ball-costume, eventually turning him round three times, as if he was playing at blindman's buff without the bandage, to see that everything was perfectly *comme-il-faut*. They then descended to the drawing-room, where they found Emma Ledbury admiring a *bouquet* which was lying on the cheffonier ; and her admiration greatly increased when Jack stated that he had brought it in his hat on purpose for her ; and, then, she admired the beautiful flowers, and Jack invented an elegant compliment, something about her being a more exquisite flower than any of them ; and then Emma curtsied so prettily as she smiled at Jack's politeness ; and Jack Johnson bowed gracefully in return ; and Titus, perceiving that his presence was not in any way necessary to the absolute happiness of either his sister

or his friend, walked into the conservatory on the landing, and gave a last glance to see if his oranges were all right, previously to lighting one or two illumination-lamps, which he had suspended to the laurel-branches. And when he had finished, he stepped back to admire his handiwork, and called Jack and Emma out to look at it, and say if it was not quite like a scene in the story of Aladdin. But Jack and Emma were having a turn or two in a waltz to their own music, just to see if their step was the same, which was proved to be so, to their entire satisfaction; so Mr. Ledbury was compelled to be content with the encomiums of his mother, who came down just at that period, and requested Emma would see that all the lamps and candles were properly lighted, because she thought she heard the sound of a fly in the lane.

Nor was she mistaken, for immediately afterwards there was a knock at the door; and, after much mysterious shuffling about in the passage, and inquiries of the servant as to what time the carriages were ordered—for flies are always “carriages” at evening parties,—the guests were ushered upstairs, preceded by the boy in buttons, who rushed up like a lamplighter, and announced “Mr. and the Miss Simpsons.” Mr. Simpson was a young gentleman, with his hair curled, in a rich plaid satin stock, which he imagined to be very fashionable, having seen so many of that

quiet, unobtrusive pattern in the shops of Islington. The Miss Simpsons were three tall figures, with red hair, who looked as if they had been cut out of Parian marble, and nourished upon writing-paper; and, being thin withal, and dressed in light poplins, they prompted Jack Johnson to tell Emma Ledbury, very wickedly, that they put him in mind of animated sticks of self-lighting sealing-wax. Then the young ladies remarked what a beautiful day it had been, and asked Miss Ledbury if she had been out walking; and Mr. Simpson inquired of Mr. Ledbury how he liked Paris, and whether there was anything in the papers.

Old Mrs. Hoddle, who lived a few doors off, next made her appearance, preceded to the gate by her maid with a lantern (although the entire distance was between two bright gas-lamps), and having her head enveloped in some artful contrivance of green calico, lined with pink, about the size and fashion of the calash of a Margate bathing-machine. The old lady was a long while coming up stairs, and would stop on the landing to look at the conservatory, which pleased Titus when he perceived that his ingenuity was already rewarded with one admirer; and, when she finally arrived at the drawing-room, she "would say this, that, amongst all her friends, Mrs. Ledbury certainly did contrive to exhibit the greatest taste in her arrangements:" and then,

after the customary courtesies, she began a long story of how dreadfully she and her maid had been frightened the night before by a strange cat, and one or two other appalling circumstances, which were cut short by the arrival of some more guests. Mrs. Hoddle was then inducted by Titus to a comfortable seat at the end of the room, where she remained until supper, greatly edified by the quadrilles, which she still called the new-fashioned way of dancing, and occasionally considerably terrified by the waltzers.

When the hour of invitation to an Islington evening party is stated to be nine o'clock, the guests have a curious custom of assembling within a short period of the exact specified time; and, accordingly, they now began to arrive pretty quickly; so much so, that Titus saw, with honest pride, as he peeped through the blinds, at one time there were actually two cabs and a fly waiting to put down their inmates at the gate. And he felt the triumph the greater because his family were not exactly on the best of terms with the Grimleys, next door; and only hoped that Mrs. Grimley was at the window, to see what a large connexion they had. Besides, he knew there were some private carriages to come—the Claverleys, at all events, never minded taking their horses out at night: and he was, also, uncharitable enough to imagine how uncomfortable Miss Grimley would feel, as she lay in bed, and listened to

the piano, through the wall, playing the various dances.

But if this trifling circumstance afforded Mr. Ledbury gratification, how much more was he delighted when he received the congratulations of all his friends, by turns, upon his safe return to England ! And when the thrilling time came for him to commence the quadrille with one of the prettiest girls in the room, in all the glory of his Paris trousers, and little French boots with glazed toes, he thought all his past dangers were compensated by the power they thus endowed him with of being able to distinguish himself. And he did not feel awkward by the side of his partner, nor find a difficulty in entering into conversation, as he did when we first knew him, before he went abroad ; but he indulged in a rapid succession of brilliant images and descriptions, that almost astonished himself, but at the same time persuaded him of the wonderful efficacy of travelling in expanding the mind.

Jack Johnson danced opposite to him with Emma ; and there were many telegraphic signals between them, or sly speeches when they chanced to meet in the quadrille. And now and then, when Jack caught Ledbury's eye, in the confusion of the figure, he introduced a quiet imitation of the *cancan*, quite betwixt themselves, and understood by nobody else, which instantaneously



gave birth to a new train of ideas, and *souvenirs* of their own party in the Rue St. Jacques, and Aimée, as her own pretty self, and as the *débardeur*, with recollections of Mr. Ledbury's *début* at Tonnelier's, when he could not waltz at all, and many other pleasant retrospections, which Titus was almost tempted to tell his partner about, thinking it would astonish her. And, in all probability, it would have done so very much.

The guests had all arrived, including the Claverleys, who *did* come in their own carriage, as Mr. Ledbury hoped they would; and one of the young ladies who had brought their music, of extreme timidity, and with a faint soprano voice, was in the middle of favouring the company with the trumpet-chorus at the commencement of "Norma," put to some highly vigorous and poetical English words about her cottage-home, or her native land, or something of the kind, when a scuffle, accompanied by sounds of infantile anger, was heard upon the stairs; and the door being thrust violently open, Master Walter Ledbury made his appearance, habited only in his night-gown and cap, with the nurse's shawl partly dragging behind him, and partly wrapped round him, in a manner which led the spectators to believe he had made his own toilet. And his presence was scarcely noticed ere Foster rushed in after him, and exclaiming, in mingled accents

of distress and intimidation, "Oh! Master Walter—you naughty, naughty boy!" caught him up in her arms.

But Master Walter was not going to yield himself a prisoner without a struggle; and after vainly attempting to seize the light-blue sarsnet ribands of Foster's cap, published quite new upon the occasion, he commenced a series of loud cries and struggling gymnastics, kicking his little fat legs about very wildly, in a reckless manner, that caused great confusion amongst a large part of the company. Nor did there at first appear a great chance of getting him back again; for the truth was, that the young gentleman, having been wide awake all the evening, with a restlessness induced, most probably, by indigestion, had listened to the music until he felt desirous of joining in the revelries; and, taking advantage of Foster's absence in the refreshment-room, had marched down stairs, to her great consternation.

"Now, my darling Watty!—there's a dear, good boy!—go up stairs so pretty and nice with Foster," said Mrs. Ledbury, overcome with confusion, and putting on her most winning look and accent.

"I shan't," was the simple, but energetic reply.

"Return to the nursery, sir!" cried Mr. Ledbury, in a voice that was absolutely terrific, and made his partner tremble.

“No, I won’t” said Walter. “I don’t care for you, and I don’t care for Foster, and I don’t care for mamma, and I don’t care for nobody.”

Nor did it appear as if he did; for even Emma’s proverbial ascendancy over his actions entirely failed. And the usually potent threat of summoning the tall man in the cocked-hat and shirt-sleeves, who kept the bogies to eat little boys, was of no avail; so that at last Titus, losing all command over his better feelings, and with a wrath he had never before shown, seized his brother wildly, and bore him off in a Rolla-like paroxysm, when the closing of the nursery-door soon shut out his very energetic cries. One or two of the guests had the curiosity to watch the retreating group; and these were also favoured with a momentary glimpse of Mr. Ledbury senior, who had arrived at home during this slight interruption to the gaieties of the night, and forthwith darted to his own bed-room with all the alacrity he could muster, never once showing his face amongst the guests all the evening, but regarding the whole assemblage as a society of harmless lunatics, each, in the true spirit of the inmates of Bedlam, finding amusement in the others’ antics.

The usual routine of evening-party amusements went on in the accustomed order, in the course of which Jack Johnson was, to use his own phrase, swindled into singing a sentimental song, which

was an impropriety he would never have been guilty of had not Emma Ledbury played the accompaniment; and about a quarter past twelve Mrs. Ledbury informed Titus, in great confidence, that she thought it was time the lamps in the supper-room were lighted, if Mr. Johnson would be kind enough to look after them. Whereupon Jack enlisted the boy in buttons into his service, and left the room, giving Miss Ledbury the hint to get up another quadrille, or "prevail upon some young lady to favour them with another of her delightful songs," just to carry on time, both of which Emma contrived to do; and, by the time they had finished, Jack had touched all the wicks with turpentine, lighted the lamps, and wound up the jack, which set the illuminated balloon revolving in a manner highly gratifying to behold.

In a short time, all being pronounced perfectly in order, the French window of the supper-room was thrown open, amidst the continuous expressions of lively admiration from the guests, and more especially from old Mrs. Hoddle, who, knowing the accommodations of the house, had been wondering all the evening whereabouts the supper would be, or whether they were to be put off with a few tarts, sandwiches, and cut oranges handed about the room. There was the customary confusion in providing seats for all the ladies; and several funny young gentlemen, who had

esconced themselves very comfortably next to their last partners, for the sake of talking all sorts of delightful nonsense to them, and turning the whole meal into a *mélange* of fowls and flirting, creams and compliments, and lobster-salad and love-making, were summarily ejected by Jack Johnson, as soon as he discovered that there were ladies still without seats. Emma displayed considerable generalship in placing Mrs. Claverley exactly opposite the trifle ; and Titus, in a most polite manner, offered his arm to old Mrs. Hoddle, and, engaging her in conversation, walked her quite down to the bottom of the table, where there was nothing for her to tell the price of to her neighbours. Nobody appeared to notice the absence of Mr. Ledbury senior, or if they did, nobody seemed to care about it : indeed, as two or three of the most presentable clerks in his office had been invited, the chances are that they were much more gratified to find he did not show upon the occasion.

After a space of about twenty minutes had elapsed, during which considerable havoc had been made amongst the delicacies of the table, Jack Johnson took a pint-decanter in his hand, and, rising from his seat, exclaimed,

“ Gentlemen, may I request you to see that the ladies have some wine in their glasses ; and will you do me the favour to fill your own ? ”

Hereupon there was a little simultaneous

bustle, every young gentleman seizing the nearest decanter, and every young lady, after about four drops had been poured into her glass, arresting the effusion of a greater quantity with her hand, as she said, "That is quite sufficient, thank you."

"Ladies," continued Jack, laying much softness on the word, "and gentlemen: I have the permission of Mrs. Ledbury to propose a toast, which I am sure will be received by all of you in the most enthusiastic manner; and more especially by the ladies, if I may judge from the kind expression of that nearer, dearer, clearer heaven of stars that beams around me."

And here Jack gently pressed Emma Ledbury's foot under the table, and Emma, very much offended, drew her foot away; but, with her usual amiability, forgetting the affront altogether, allowed it to return to the same place the next instant.

"The individual, whose health I am about to propose, is known to all of you; and I am certain you will agree with me, that to know him is to admire him."

"Hear! hear!" from the gentlemen, and especially the presentable clerks.

"I have proved his good qualities beneath the skies of foreign lands," continued Jack, "and on the bounding ocean,—that mighty monster,

that lies coiled like a green serpent round about the world—”

“ Beautiful ! ” from several young ladies, including the Misses Simpson.

“ And I can assure you that I am proud to call him my friend. I therefore will intrude upon your time no longer, but beg you will drink the health of Mr. Titus Ledbury, whose happy return we are met here to celebrate this evening : and—if you please—with the usual honours.”

Great applause followed the conclusion of the speech, everybody looking towards our hero, and thumping the table ; and as they all drank his health, a very close observer might have seen his eyes glisten under his spectacles ; especially when Jack Johnson shook his hand warmly, and merely observed, “ Leddy ! old brick ! here’s your jolly good health ! ” in an under-tone, but not the less warmly upon that account.

There was a general silence as Mr. Ledbury tremblingly poured out a glass of wine until it ran over, and rose from his seat. But, scarcely had he uttered “ Ladies and gentlemen,”—scarcely did the majority of the guests know that he had commenced his speech, when there was a sudden and violent rent in the canvass of the ceiling,—a leg forcibly protruded itself ; and, the same instant, to the horror and astonishment of

the guests, a boy in buttons burst through the top of the temporary room, and fell down, all in a heap, upon the trifle, breaking the barley-sugar temple that enshrined it into ten thousand fragments, and scattering its contents far and wide, but more especially into the lap of Mrs. Claverley. At the same time he knocked an argand-lamp into the lap of one of the Miss Simpsons, and kicked a decanter of port over the dress of the other.

The wildest confusion followed the unexpected apparition. Many of the young ladies, who had eligible gentlemen near them, fainted clean off. Old Mrs. Hoddle was perfectly paralysed. Mrs. Ledbury, as soon as her intellects returned, recollected there would be five-and-twenty shillings to pay for the broken trifle dish ; and Mrs. Claverley, whose emerald velvet was covered with trifle, remained a few minutes in speechless anger ; and then, boldly asserting that people who gave evening parties ought to provide better accommodation, strode majestically from the room, and was never seen again. It was her final retirement from the Islington theatre ; and a most dramatic exit she made.

Springing from their respective places,—Jack Johnson like a tiger, and Ledbury like a mechanical frog,—they seized the intruder, and dragged him from the table. In an instant the truth was apparent. The Grimleys next door, curious to







have an account of the festivities from which they were excluded, had stationed their 'page' on the garden-wall, to watch the proceedings, and report accordingly. But the 'page,' in the manner of his ancient pretty prototypes, anxious to "look out afar," had climbed on to the roof, to get a better view. As long as he kept upon the poles, he was tolerably safe; but, chancing to miss his hold, he had glided down a little, and the canvass not being strong enough to support him, allowed him to enter the supper-room in the unceremonious manner here described. The greater part of this was inference, for the boy was in such an extreme state of trepidation that he could not utter a word. So Jack Johnson committed him to the care of Ledbury's boy in buttons, with directions that he should be immediately kicked back again by the front doors, with his kind regards to the family: and as, in a similar manner to ancient times, the feuds of the family were followed up amongst the retainers, the order was immediately executed in a most satisfactory manner.

Of course the ladies immediately left the table; and it was not until they had danced two sets of quadrilles by themselves that they recovered from the affright. The harsher sex, it is true, looked upon it as a glorious joke, and their reappearance set everything going again as merrily as before: more especially when Mrs. Led-

bury and Emma agreed not to tell the old gentleman anything about it, but leave him to find it out. And so the evening passed, or rather the night, and part of the next morning, until Jack Johnson, who remained until the last, took his departure, promising to send Spriggy the next day to take down the things, with a recommendation for them to look after him. And Mrs. Ledbury, Titus, and Emma, having seen that all the plate was right, and not a great deal of glass broken, or oil spilt on the carpet, blew out what remained of the wax-candles, and retired to bed, each having comforted the other with the assertion, "that they were sure everybody must have passed a very happy evening," and delighted to think, with the exception of the accident, that every thing had gone off so well.

## CHAPTER XVI.

IN WHICH WE FIND JACK JOHNSON AT HOME.

NORTH STREET, Theobald's Road, is a colony not exactly within cry of the clubs, but withal a retired and perfectly respectable *locale*, supposed to have been originally found out by a gentleman too late for dinner, in the endeavour to discover a north-west passage from Bedford Row to Queen Square. The houses, as well as their occupants, are staid and solemn, wearing the air of a generation that has passed away; the window frames are heavy, the glass dusky, and the sparrows have pecked away the mortar from all the bricks of the chimneys. Notwithstanding the seclusion, a variety of *al fresco* exhibitions constantly take place in the street to enliven the aborigines. Piano-organs love the neighbourhood; Punch here erects his four-post theatre, and screams and riots in undisturbed mischief; and the man who does the trick with the doll has been known to visit the thoroughfare; whilst to the feline sportsman it offers peculiar advantages, more cats appearing there at night, probably, than on any other spot

in London, — the streets running out of the Strand alone excepted. It is not presumed that an evening party ever took place in North Street, beyond the mechanical one in front of an extensive musical instrument, which performed there one night, and represented several couples waltzing round and round, with a very polite little figure revolving by himself, who made several rapid and convulsive bows with his comical hat whenever he faced the spectators ; and from this the inhabitants gleaned some ideas as to what an evening party was ; thinking it singular, at the same time, that at regular intervals a troop of horse-soldiers came in at one door and out at the other, all across the ball-room ; which proceeding had certainly a strange appearance, but, without doubt, was customary in high life.

The lodgings of Jack Johnson were in the above thoroughfare ; and the morning had advanced to an hour half-way between the average time of breakfast and lunch in sober and well-conducted families, ere he awoke, on the day subsequent to the party at Ledbury's. Upon retiring to bed, in the vanity of his heart, and the reliance upon his strength of mind, he had set the alarum of a small clock, which hung in his chamber, to go off at half-past eight ; but, when the time came, and the weight ran down in a most intoxicated manner, to the shrill clatter of its own bell, he was still wrapt in a deep slum-

ber. Nor were his dreams disturbed either by the noise in the house, the perambulating euterpion in the streets, (which always reminded one of many trumpets put into a coffee-mill,) or the occasional information conveyed to him by the servant at the door, that each time she came it was half-an-hour after her last visit; and that the warm water had been changed three times, in consequence (to use the language of useful knowledge) of diminution of caloric caused by gradual evaporation.

At length he awoke; and, collecting an immense quantity of resolution, as soon as he understood clearly that he was in proper possession of his faculties, he proceeded to make his toilet; which he did pretty well, considering that he got through the greater part of the process with his eyes shut. But all the time he could not banish the vision of Emma Ledbury from his imagination; and when he sat down to breakfast, he thought what an elysium his second-floor front would become if she were there to make coffee for him! With her for a companion, how smoothly the current of his life would flow! and how very pretty she looked last night!—with many wonders as to whether she cared for him, or merely regarded him as she did other friends of her brother; and various other pleasant speculations which young gentlemen are apt to fall into after they have met attractive young ladies at

evening-parties. But, perhaps, all these reveries were the more singular in Jack Johnson, because he had not often amused himself, before this time, with building matrimonial bowers in the air, or giving way to any other delicious absurdities of the same class.

He was trying to persuade himself that he really had an appetite for his breakfast — a custom usual with people after a festive evening — when the servant announced that a man wished to speak to him; and, as she appeared anxious not to leave him alone in the passage longer than was absolutely necessary, Johnson ordered him up. As he entered the room, our friend immediately recognized the professor of “misery for the million,” whom he had met in the cellar in Saint Giles’s.

“I’ve brought this bit of paper, doctor,” said the man, who apparently still believed such to be Johnson’s profession, “from the young man as was ill in our crib.”

Johnson hastily took the note, and read with some difficulty the following words, faintly scrawled in pencil:

“I have not thought it advisable to stay here longer; and, by the time you receive this, I shall have left the place. You will hear from me as soon as I have again settled. Take care of *that* — you know — for we may need it.”

“When was this written?” asked Johnson.



“Last night, sir,” was the reply; “before he left. I don’t think he was much fit to go. He look’d uncommon cranky, to be sure!”

“Did any one ever come to see him besides myself?”

“There was a gentleman, sir, as come two or three times, and went off in a cab with him last night.”

“What sort of a man?”

“A perfect gentleman, sir. He wore a scarlet neckcloth and mustachios.”

Johnson made no further remark, but remained for a few minutes lost in reflection. His visitor also kept perfectly silent, perched upon the extreme corner of a chair, with his legs tucked underneath it, after the manner of the common orders in general, when they sit down in company with their superiors, — as if they thought it was good breeding to wear out as little of the carpet and furniture as possible. And so they rested for a short period, Johnson finding out models of the Alps in the moist sugar, and the man looking about at the neighbouring windows of the street, apparently calculating what sort of an audience he could entice to them on a future occasion.

“I beg pardon, doctor,” said the visitor, at length breaking silence; “but, perhaps, you can be of some service to me.”

“ Oh ! certainly,” replied Johnson, not exactly hearing the question. “ What is it ? ”

“ I keeps a fantosceny, magic lantern, and Punch, and perwides amusements for parties,” continued the man. “ I ’ll make bold, sir, to give you my card.”

Whereupon he searched in some mysterious pocket of his fustian coat, and produced a small parallelogram of dirty pasteboard, imprinted with the information which he had conveyed to Johnson ; and immediately afterwards dived into another capacious opening in his jacket, and dragged out a Punch’s head, which he exhibited with great admiration, accompanying the action by one of the squeaks peculiar to that facetious puppet.

“ There ’s a pictur’, sir ! — ain’t it nat’ral ? ” asked the man, looking at it with the affection of a parent. “ My pardner’s going to tog it to-night ; and then we shall keep it for families of respectability.”

“ I think it is too smart for the streets,” said Johnson, feeling himself called upon to pay some compliment to the wooden offspring of his visitor.

“ Bless you ! he ’ll never perform in the streets ! ” answered the man apparently feeling his *protégé* insulted ; “ the dodges there is too wiolent for such a handsome Punch as this. He ’s too genteel to attract the street-people, he is. He wouldn’t draw no more than a second-hand blister upon a milestone.”

“Then, what is he for?” asked Jack.

“Why, you see, sir, we are obliged to cut the jokes uncommon underdone for families; they doesn’t like the baby being thrown out o’ window, nor the coffin for Jack Ketch.”

“And, why not?”

“Because the children always pitches their dolls into the streets, to imitate us, from the nursery-windows. I’ve know’d ’em try to hang the babies, where there has been any, before this.”

Johnson could not forbear smiling at the man’s caution, in assuming to himself the censorship of his own drama; but, as he was at present in no very great humour for talking, he told him that he would let him know if he required his services, previously to wishing him good morning. And, when he was gone, Jack again fell into a train of anxious thought respecting his cousin, mingled with a certain proportion of apprehension lest he should be inveigled into any unpleasant position from the trifling share he had taken in the transaction. More than once he felt tempted to start immediately to the bank from which Morris had absconded, and return the whole of the money entrusted to his charge, which, to his surprise, amounted to upwards of a hundred sovereigns: but, then, the solemn promise he had made to his cousin, and the hope that he might still be reclaimed, again changed his resolution,

and for a period he remained in exceeding perplexity ; the reaction, after his high spirits of the previous evening, in no wise tending to make him think the better of the world or its inmates, or helping him, for the moment, to place things in a more cheering point of view. Then he thought of his own position, and the little prospect which appeared of his ever being able to improve it sufficiently to reach that proper station in society, which, with all his levity, he wished to occupy ; and this point of his ruminations brought him again to Emma Ledbury, towards whom, he could not persuade himself that his feelings were altogether indifferent. And, finally, he thought of all these things at once, until he got into a labyrinth of intricate ideas, that almost made him imagine his brain was revolving on its own axis.

We have never studied metaphysics, nor shall we make the attempt until we have heard an argument upon that science which will conclude by one of the parties disputing being brought round to the other's way of thinking—a consummation we never yet witnessed ; but we may, perhaps, be allowed to speak of the elasticity of the mind as one of its most glorious attributes. It turns the brain into a stuffed spring-seat for the weary spirits to repose upon after any unusual exertion ; and provides an easy-chair for thought nearly worn out by trouble, luxurious

and repose-inviting as any hydrostatic bed. And very accommodating indeed was Jack Johnson's mental organisation in this respect, for it resembled the metal-coil of a patent candlestick ; since, however forced down by contingent circumstances, yet, as soon as a light dispelled the dark shade that hovered round, it rose up again higher and higher, until the cause of its depression had disappeared altogether, and it retained its wonted freedom and elevation. He might, perhaps, have been as aptly considered as a human Jack-in-the-box, whom no adverse casualties, however forcible at the time, could permanently beat down ; but, on the contrary, they enabled him to rise again above the gloom of his troubles, even with increased power, and aspiring energy. Had he allowed himself to be depressed by every unpleasantness, he would have experienced a sad time of it altogether ; but he was, as we have seen, of a cheerful and vivacious disposition, rather inclined to look at the bright side of everything and everybody, and seldom paying trouble the compliment of meeting it half-way ; which proceeding, from a sense of politeness on the part of the coming evil, often causes it to advance with greater confidence, when it would otherwise have kept off altogether.

Although Jack was not above six-and-twenty, yet he had lived and seen more than many with ten or twelve additional years on their shoulders.

Thrown upon his own resources at comparatively an early age, he had precociously acquired a practical knowledge of the world, and the usages of nearly all classes of society. His father had been an idle and improvident man, always in embarrassed circumstances—although, it is but fair to state, more from carelessness than dishonesty—and allowing his children to grow up, rather than be brought up, solely because he would not exert himself to put them in the right path. The consequence was, that, upon his death a perfect separation of the family took place; one or two of the boys going to situations in the colonies, or other refuges for the destitute social-suicides; and Jack, who was the eldest, inheriting what little property was left behind; which, whilst it was scarcely enough to enable him to live in moderate comfort, was yet sufficient to give him a distaste for exertion in following any avocation. And so, after trying various schemes; after having taken up medicine, literature, law, and even the drama, he gave up the pursuit of employment under difficulties, and eked out his small property by some of those mysterious occupations which men follow who are reported to live by their wits.

He had just determined upon taking a walk to Hampstead, to imbibe a little fresh air, when he heard a knock at his door; and Mr. Ledbury came in, all smiles and pleasantry, with some

violets in his button-hole, and looking quite like a gallant cavalier. From this Jack inferred that he had been calling to inquire after the health of one of the *belles* who had shone on the preceding evening, which proved to be the case; Mr. Ledbury having risen rather earlier than he would otherwise have done, and, by crafty mechanical appliances of glue, ribbon, and gold-paper, mended a fan in most workmanlike style, which the most attractive of his partners had broken in one of the quadrilles; and now he had been to return it, with many delightful speeches and compliments, and energetic assurances from the young lady that "it was the most delightful evening she ever recollected," as is customary upon such occasions.

"Well, Jack! old man! how are you?" was Mr. Ledbury's first question, as he shook hands with his friend.

"Oh! very well, as the times go, Leddy! What fun we had! And, what are you going to do to-day?"

"Nothing particular," replied Ledbury: "can you put up anything? I am not much inclined for work; and they are doing nothing at home but putting things away. There's no great fun in that, Jack?"

"Not much. How's the governor?"

"Nobody has seen anything of him. The servants say he went into the city this morning,

as usual—I believe, a little time before they thought of going to bed. Well; what shall we do?”

“Rush out, and take our chance of whatever may turn up,” replied Jack. “I feel myself as if I wanted to be shaken about a little; and I suppose they will not miss you at home?”

“Not at all!” said Ledbury. “It will be a decided case of go-to-bed-early with all of them.”

Whereupon they both agreed that they would make a night of it; and Ledbury went back to Islington, intending to get the key, as well as a highly-fashionable and picturesque ten-and-six-penny-coal-sack-looking coat, which he had been persuaded by Jack Johnson to buy, for night-excursions; promising to meet his friend in the afternoon, and dine with him at the old eating-house where we first introduced them both to the reader.



## CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE ADVENTURE WHICH MR. LEDBURY, IN COMPANY  
WITH HIS FRIEND, MET WITH AT A PENNY-SHOW.

TRUE to the appointment, just as the gas-lamps were beginning to glimmer in the haze of the declining daylight, and Hanway Yard and Great Russell Street were nearly filled with a stream of population, (chiefly young ladies, governesses, and little girls, hurrying home in a north-easterly direction, to the squares, with the purchases they had been making at the West-End,) just as the post-meridian milk-pails intimated their arrival, with melancholy cry, at the areas of Alfred Place, and the *al-fresco merchants* of Tottenham Court Road began to exhibit their whity-brown paper transparencies, casting a mellow and subdued light upon the baskets, which, in company with Hesperus, brought "all good things home to the weary, to the hungry, cheer,"—as we have it so well described by a great poet, who goes on to talk about the "welcome stall" and "hearth-stones," which prove incontrovertibly he had Tottenham Court Road in his mind when he

penned the stanza ;—just at this time then, (for we are losing ourselves in a very long sentence, and must come back to where we began,) Mr. Ledbury once more found himself at Jack Johnson's lodgings. His friend was finishing a letter for the post ; and, requesting Ledbury to sit down for a short time, begged him to send out for some very immense and finely-flavoured half-and-half, which was to be obtained round the corner,—a peculiar locality where everything is always to be got. But, as dinner-time was approaching, Ledbury declined ; contenting himself with borrowing Johnson's pipe, which he filled with some tobacco from the capacious stomach of a broken Lablache tumbler-doll, standing on the mantelpiece, and then puffing away with suitable gravity, watching the smoke as it assumed a thousand fantastic shapes ere it disappeared ; which occupation is presumed to be one of the chief pleasures which a pipe can offer.

At last they started off ; and, the moment they left the door, all Jack Johnson's vivacity returned, his merriment being in no degree lessened by the recollection of bygone frolics, which being out once more alone with Ledbury gave rise to. And Mr. Ledbury partook of his friend's hilarity, and even once attempted to chaff a policeman, by making a courteous inquiry after the health of his inspector. After which Jack knocked over a row of little boys, one after another, who were stand-

ing on their heads by the side of the pavement ; which proceeding drew after them a volley of salutations peculiar to little boys, much increased when he put one of their caps in his pocket, and carried it with him an indefinite distance, concluding the insult by throwing it a great way into a linendraper's shop ; where it hit one of the gentlemen in the white neckcloths, who revenged himself upon the little boy by kicking him out of the shop, across the pavement, and clean over to the cab-stand, the minute he went in to ask for it.

The dinner passed off with considerable spirit, aided by "the feast of reason, and the flow of"—beer ; and, having ordered a pint of wine in a reckless manner, that completely paralysed the waiter, no such fluid ever having made its appearance there before in the memory of the oldest frequenter, they sallied forth again.

"I shall trust to you, Jack," said Ledbury ; "for I am quite as ignorant of the ways of London as I was of Paris when I first got there. But I shall soon improve under your tuition."

They wandered through a number of back streets, making various observations, philosophical and playful, upon what they saw, until their attention was arrested by the announcement of an exhibition of peculiar interest at the door of a house which they were passing ; and several loiterers were on the pavement, listening to the organ, that was playing to entice an audience, or

endeavouring to peer into the mysteries of the *penetralia* beyond the entrance. The price of admission was one penny, which they both paid, after Johnson had offered to toss the proprietor whether they should give him twopence or nothing—a speculation which the exhibitor repulsed with much indignation.

Mr. Ledbury felt rather nervous as he approached the dark portal of the exhibition-room; and was not re-assured, upon asking a decent-looking female seated at the door which was the way, in receiving no answer; until he perceived he had been addressing a wax-likeness of Maria Martin. At last they arrived at a long room, adorned with panoramic paintings of several of the most favourite localities in the artist's imagination,—the most effective being a view of Constantinople from the middle arch of Blackfriars' Bridge. A large party of wax heads, put upon bodies, and furnished with clothes, were ranged round the room; and the inventive facetiousness of the owner had been taxed in assigning to them various names of popular or notorious individuals, whom he supposed or wished them to resemble. Mr. Ledbury had never been to Madame Tussaud's, nor, indeed, had he seen any wax-figures at all, except the vivid representation of a gentleman as he appeared with his hair curled, in the window of a *coiffeur* at Islington, who had been by turns Marshal Soult, Prince Albert, and the

King of Prussia,—so that he was still somewhat awed at finding himself in the presence of so many great people. But at last he took courage from watching the reckless manner in which Jack Johnson behaved, questioning the exhibitor right and left respecting his curiosities.

“This,” said the man, approaching a species of oblong cucumber-frame with great importance,—“this is the mummy of an Egyptian above three thousand year old.”

“Bless me!” observed Jack, with an air of great importance; “what an age they lived to in Egypt! Pray, sir, is it Cheops?”

“No, sir,” replied the man indignantly; “it’s real bones and flesh.”

“I never saw a mummy,” said Ledbury, peering into the case upon the compound of pitch and brown paper which it enclosed.

“You’ll see thousands soon,” replied Jack. “The New Asphalte Company are going to import all they can find in Egypt, to pound them up, and pave the walks of Kensal Cemetery with. Come along, or we shall lose the description.”

“This is George the Fourth,” said the man, pointing to a very slim figure with a theatrical crown on its head.

“I thought he was a very stout man,” observed Ledbury, plucking up sufficient courage to make an observation.

“Very likely,” replied the man shortly, not

approving of the comments of his visitors ; “ but, if you ’d been here without victuals half as long as he has, you ’d be twice as thin.”

There was a laugh from the other spectators ; and Mr. Ledbury, completely overcome, did not offer any more remarks, but followed the man and his audience to another *salon* upstairs, where a coarse, red curtain was drawn across the room, concealing more wonders. The exhibitor formed his audience into a semicircle upon low forms round the chamber ; and then, first of all, led forward a young lady with pink eyes, who appeared to have allowed no end of silkworms to spin all over her head ; and, next, a little man about two feet high, in knee-breeches and mustachios, who bowed very politely to the company, and then, without further preface, struck up a song with a very indistinct articulation, which Jack Johnson defined to be expressive of fear, commencing, as nearly as he could catch the words “ My heart ’s in my highlows !”

He had not got through four lines, when Ledbury heard a sudden noise in the thoroughfare, upon which the window close to him looked down—one of those mysterious localities only disclosed when their unknown topography is occasionally invaded by a new street. A hack-cab had stopped at the top of the court, surrounded by a crowd of people, who beset it on either side, peeping in at the windows, crawling up to the

box, and betraying various other signs of intense curiosity to behold what was inside. Presently, a couple of policemen appeared, and cleared a passage to the door; and then Ledbury saw a female, in what appeared to him a theatrical dress, carried from the cab to the door.

“Look here!—what is going on below?” said Ledbury, interrupting the dwarf’s song, and calling the attention of the man to the window.

The noise in the court had put all the inhabitants on the *qui vive*; and every window had an occupant gazing upon the tumult. The neighbours, also, had assembled on the steps of each other’s doors, to inquire “What was the row,” and add to the general Babel of chatter; for a disturbed ant’s nest is a scene of tranquillity compared to the sudden gathering of a court in a low London neighbourhood, when an itinerant posture-master, a drunken riot, an insulted policeman, or an unexpected accident, breaks in upon its general uniformity of dirt, drunkenness, and poverty.

“I’m shot if it ain’t Letty brought home bad!” observed the man to the dwarf, as he caught a sight of the girl, who was being taken into the house.

“Oh dear! oh dear!” cried the little dwarf, in accents of distress, as he stopped his song, “what has happened to her?” And, hurrying towards the window, round which the greater

part of the audience now collected, he ran backwards and forwards, trying to peep between them, as we have seen a mouse do between the wires of his cage, when newly introduced.

"I'll be much obliged to you to go away, ladies and gentlemen, if you please," said the showman. "I think an accident has happened to a young woman as lives in the house."

"Keep by me," whispered Johnson to Ledbury, as the people were departing, "and we may see something here. I am a medical man," he continued, addressing the exhibitor, "and so is my friend. We shall be happy if we can be of any service to you."

The offer was thankfully accepted; and, leaving Ledbury for a minute to make the agreeable to the young lady with the pink eyes, Johnson and the showman, followed by the dwarf, whose countenance betrayed extreme anxiety, went down stairs and met a policeman carrying the girl, whom they immediately assisted.

Being directed to one of the rooms at the top of the house, they had some little difficulty in supporting their patient up the steep and narrow stairs; nor were their clothes improved by the contact of the rough and craggy walls on each side of them, the plaster from which had fallen off in large flakes, laying bare the laths in several places, and crushing under their feet as they ascended. At every landing the occupants had



collected from curiosity, peeping over one another's heads through the half-opened doorways of their apartments, one or two miserable slipshod females following them up stairs.

They kept going up and up until they came to the topmost garret, and here they entered, when Johnson ordered the policeman to remain at the door, admitting only Ledbury, the Albinese, and the dwarf. They then placed their patient upon an apology for a bed in the corner of the room, and proceeded to ascertain what had befallen her.

It appeared that she had been dancing on the tight rope as a "Swiss gleaner," or something of the kind, at one of the inferior musical taverns of the neighbourhood ; and the rope, not having been firmly secured by the pulley, had slipped, and thrown her upon the floor, giving her foot a severe wrench. She was unable to stand, and her face assumed an expression of acute pain, ill disguised by the coarse rouge and powder covering her features, which, but for their jaded and anxious look, would have been perfectly beautiful.

Whilst the pink-eyed girl was divesting the sufferer of a few outer portions of her tawdry spangled dress, Johnson sat upon an old deal box in the corner, and cast a glance round the room. From the slanting roof, it was evidently immediately beneath the tiles, and about ten feet

square. A few bricks, divided by pieces of old iron-hooping, formed the fire-place ; but the blackened front of the mantelpiece, and ceiling altogether, showed the smoke had a predilection for the interior of the apartment, instead of going up the chimney, in spite of the tattered piece of drapery nailed across the top of the aperture to improve the draught. A patched and ancient bed-curtain, which had once been blue-check, attached to a line, divided the room into two small portions. There was an old Dutch clock in one corner of the apartment, surmounted by a quaint little figure of a skeleton, which mowed away in unceasing unison with the beat of the pendulum ; but, as the hands pertinaciously refused to move, except when they went occasionally a little backwards, the whole affair seemed in the situation of a favourite done-up horse, turned out for the rest of his life in a paddock, who, having worked hard in his time, and being no longer useful, is allowed to go on as he likes, just for his own amusement. A few articles of stage-costume and jewellery were scattered about the room, and some worn-out slippers, edged with tarnished lace, were lying upon the floor.

“ Well, now we ’ll see the foot,” said Johnson kindly, as he approached the bed.

“ I hope you ’re not going to cut me, sir ?” said the dancer, entertaining the common opinion of the lower orders, that no operation can be accomplished without knives.

“No, no; you need not alarm yourself,” replied Johnson, grasping the foot, and moving it in different directions. We have said that he knew something of surgery, and the examination sufficed to show him that no bones were broken. But he kept up the importance of his assumed profession, and, turning round to his friend, said, “Now, Mr. Ledbury, have the kindness to look at this. I think you will agree with me that there is no fracture.”

For a wonder Ledbury perceived his drift, and, pretending to examine the joint, although with much trepidation, returned a satisfactory answer.

“It is a bad sprain,” continued Johnson, “and will require rest. Have you any rags, for some pads and a bandage?” he asked of the Albinese.

The pink-eyed girl didn’t know—she was not quite sure—the children did take everything so, and she had only been saying that morning, that they shouldn’t do so. Last week she had plenty, —more than she knew what to do with; but now she hadn’t any.

The dwarf, who had been silently watching the whole of the scene with great interest, went outside the door, and communicated with the man on the landing. The result of the conference was an agreement to rob the heads of Courvoisier and Oliver Cromwell of their contents; and, the plan being adopted, a quantity

of rags was the result, which Johnson soaked in some vinegar, and applied with praiseworthy adroitness.

“How long do you think it will be before my sister can dance again, sir?” asked the dwarf.

“Is this your sister?” exclaimed Johnson, somewhat amazed to think that so small a man could have so well-formed a relation.

“She is indeed, sir,—by the same mother,” replied the dwarf, as he clasped one or two of her fingers in his tiny hand.

“She must not think of moving just yet,” said Johnson, not knowing exactly what space of time to mention.

“It is a bad job both for Madame Angelique and myself,” said the girl despondingly.

“And who is Madame Angelique?” inquired Jack.

“She dances the double dance with me, sir, that earns us most money,” said the girl. “She cannot do it by herself.”

“Tilly Davis could learn it very soon, I’m sure,” said the dwarf, most probably alluding to another *artiste*; “but I don’t know where she’s gone, since she quarrelled with the Chinese gladiator at Croydon fair.”

“I shouldn’t wonder,” said the pink-eyed girl, “if she is one of the Styrian Stunners at the Albert Pavilion. You can see to-morrow.”

This appeared to be a great triumph of sugges-

tion, from the manner in which it was received by the girl and her friends. And now, upon the patient's declaring that she felt much easier, Johnson and Ledbury prepared to take their departure, having promised, with grave looks, to call and see how the foot was going on the next day. Then, leaving the Albinese with her, they went down stairs to the room they had quitted at the time of the accident, lighted by the dwarf, who carried an emaciated candle stuck in an old inkstand, so yellow and thin, that it appeared to have suffered from jaundice for some time.

The policeman having been treated to a glass of gin, went away, having first engaged to call upon Johnson the next morning, who promised to procure him an out-door patient's order for one of the hospitals, to cure a bad cough from which he suffered; the man having applied to him, believing him to be a surgeon, and receiving no benefit from the medical man attached to the force.

"I beg you'll be seated, gentlemen," said the dwarf, as they entered the show-room, now quite deserted. "I have nothing to offer but a glass of whisky, which I hope you will do me the favour to taste."

There was such an appearance of gratitude, and anxiety to evince it, in the little man's manner, that Ledbury and his companion seated them-

selves at the fire-place, and accepted the proffered refreshment.

“That is very fine,” said Johnson, as he drank off the contents of a wine-glass without a stem, and handed it to Ledbury.

“It is very good, I believe, sir,” answered the dwarf. “I had an Irishman in my exhibition once, who was the Wild Malay. We were very good friends, and sometimes he sends me some.”

“You are master, then, of this establishment?” asked Ledbury, with as staid a politeness as a fit of coughing, brought on by the whisky, would permit.

“I am, sir,” returned the little man. “It is very hard work, though; and my health is not very good. I have sung my song four-and-twenty times in a day, when I could hardly hold my head up. Once I used to wince under the jokes of the spectators at my figure; but I do not mind them now.”

“Does your sister belong to the show as well?” inquired Johnson.

“She did, until about a twelvemonth ago, sir,” replied the dwarf, as his voice fell, “and then she left me for a time. Poor thing! poor thing!—I believe him to have been a villain, although she was very fond of him. But she has suffered for it!”

There was something very touching in the mannikin's voice as he uttered these words. Johnson, with ready tact, immediately turned the conversation, fully sorry that he had led up to it. They sat some little time longer, much amused at the intelligence and conversation of their small host; and then, wishing him good night, took their leave, promising to return.

"It is very strange," said Johnson to Ledbury, when they gained the street, "that all this should have happened. I know that girl's face as well as I know yours, and I thought that once or twice she regarded me very strangely. Where can we have met?"

"I would not trouble myself to find it out," said Ledbury. "Those things always come upon you all at once, and so will this. In the meantime let us hunt up some more amusement."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

OF THE DIVERTING MANNER IN WHICH MR. LEDBURY CON-  
CLUDED THE EVENING.

AFTER a variety of minor adventures, not of sufficient importance for us to chronicle, although highly interesting to the parties concerned, our friends found themselves, about midnight, in the neighbourhood of the theatres. Crossing over in the direction of Covent Garden Market, and enlivening the journey by occasional banterings with the basket-women, in which, it must be confessed, they generally got the worst of it, they entered Maiden Lane. Lingerin' an instant over the kitchen-grating of the Cyder cellars, in contemplation of the large fire, and affectionate admiration of the viands there displayed, they went down one flight of stairs, and up another, until they stood at the entrance of the supper-room.

“Now, then, Leddy, go a-head !” said Johnson, giving his friend a push.

“Beg your pardon, gentlemen,” interrupted the waiter at the door, placing himself in their way ; “song ’s going on.”



“ Well, let it go on, if it likes,” said Johnson ; “ I don’t want to stop it.”

“ No, sir,” replied the waiter, in a vague negative ; “ only it interrupts the harmony.”

In the course of two minutes, an unusual excitement in singing the chorus proclaimed that the “ harmony ” was about to finish.

“ Is this your first visit here ? ” asked Jack of Ledbury, to which he received an answer in the affirmative.

“ Very well, then,” he continued, “ they will be sure to applaud you, as a welcome, when you enter ; so be prepared.”

In another instant the song concluded ; and, as Jack seized Ledbury by the hand, and led him into the room, the burst of applause commenced, meant, of course, for the singer. But Mr. Ledbury took it to himself, and, removing his hat, as he would have done in a French *café*, smiled very amicably, and kept bowing on either side with much grace, all the way to the top of the room, to the great admiration of the spectators ; and at last he took his seat, amidst the jingling of stout-glasses, the cries of “ *encore*,” the shouts for “ waiter,” and the concussions of pewter-goes upon the table. The room had just filled from the theatres, and the usual bustle was in full play. There were a great many guests devouring poached eggs and roast potatoes, as if they had

eaten nothing for a month ; and a great many others smoking and drinking grog, and some talking, and others asleep, so that altogether there was a large company.

“ This is a gratifying sight, indeed, Jack ! ” said Mr. Ledbury, rubbing his hands with glee, and feeling considerably better for a pint of stout. “ What a noble room ! ”

“ And noble company, too, ” replied Johnson, getting wicked. “ You would not credit the number of great people who come here. ”

“ Law ! Point out some of them to me, ” said Ledbury.

“ Do you see that gentleman in the white Chesterfield, with the green shawl, and his hat on one side, sitting by the third pillar ? Well, that’s Sir Robert Peel. ”

“ Indeed ! ” said Mr. Ledbury rising, to get a better view of the gentleman. “ And who are those two next to him ? ”

“ Why, I think they are Count Kielmansegge and Baron Bjornstjerna. ”

“ Who ? ” asked Mr. Ledbury, somewhat confounded.

“ Don’t ask me again, ” said Johnson ; “ they are troublesome names to pronounce. They are the Hanoverian and Swedish ambassadors. ”

“ I suppose Prince Albert never comes ? ” observed Ledbury.

“ I think not, ” said Johnson, sinking his voice,

and speaking confidentially; "but I have seen Herr Von Joel here."

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Ledbury, not liking to appear ignorant, and setting down the last-named person as a relative of the Prince.

A knock from the chairman's hammer on the table commanded silence for a song, which was immediately obeyed by everybody calling out "order!" at once. When quiet was obtained, the gentleman who did the comic melody sung a humorous song, at which Mr. Ledbury so laughed, that his joyous hilarity was the admiration of everybody near him. There were one or two points in the song at which very staid people might have taken a slight exception; but it told very well in the present company, and was followed up by enthusiastic cries of "*encore!*"—a word implying a wish to hear anything over again, which the singer attended to by trolling out an entirely different one.

Thus things went on, and, aided by grog and excitement, Mr. Ledbury's mirth became fast and furious. He was in ecstasies. He laughed at the comic songs, applauded the sentimental ones, slapped Jack Johnson on the back, and once even attempted to make a pun; but this was not until after the second go of brandy. At last Jack reminded him that it was getting late, and he had a long way to go home.

“ Home ! ” said Mr. Ledbury ; “ never mind home ! What ’ s the use of going home ? You can always go there, when you can go nowhere else.”

And indeed he did not seem at all inclined to seek his paternal roof, until Johnson had used all his eloquence and influence to persuade him. But then, before he left, he insisted upon thanking the company publicly for their kind reception of him ; and next he shook hands with all the singers, telling them how happy he was sure his father would be to see them all at Islington to stay a fortnight. Then he paid the like compliment to the waiters, and finally to Mr. Rhodes himself, thanking him for his hospitality, and assuring him that he had spent a very delightful evening.

Spirituos excitement does not receive much benefit from cold air, and, in consequence, Mr. Ledbury ’ s vivacity increased when he got out of the room. As he really had a great distance before him, Johnson, who felt little inclined to go to bed, walked with him almost as far as Sadler ’ s Wells ’ theatre, and then wishing him good-b ’ ye, and telling him to take care of himself, returned home. It was a fine frosty, moonlight night, and Titus remained for a little time gazing on the New River, between the iron rails, and allowed his thoughts to wander romantically to the happy days of his childhood when he fished

therein, always buying his tackle at the adjacent shop, where there was a large stuffed perch in the window, about a foot and a half long, in the firm belief that he should catch nothing but similar ones. Having ruminated here for some little time, he pursued his journey towards the Angel ; and when he arrived there, as he had not a very great distance further to go, he mechanically felt in his waistcoat pocket for his key. But how was he horrified to find it was not there ! He searched all his pockets twice over ; he took out his handkerchief, and shook it ; he even looked in the lining of his hat ; but all to no purpose — the key was gone ! And now in an instant the sense of his situation broke upon him. He could not go home. They had, doubtless, all retired to bed early, fatigued from the preceding evening ; and what would his father say if he disturbed the house at that unusual hour ? John-son, he knew, would have given him a bed ; but he was at home by this time, — upwards of two miles off. It was so late, that the very inns were fast closed ; he did not even see a policeman to make inquiries of ; nor were any other persons about in the street that he chose to apply to. The nights were also the longest of the year, and he was very tired already, or he would have walked about until morning. In fact, he felt in a very awkward and uncomfortable plight, from which he saw at present no chance of escape.

But oftentimes, when everything around us assumes its darkest form, a light will break in from a quarter whence it was least of all expected ; and so it proved in the present instance. It will be hardly necessary to inform our readers, that High Street, Islington, where Mr. Ledbury now found himself, is an airy and imposing thoroughfare, intersected by a colossal turnpike, and bordered with broad footpaths and trees. The intelligent and enterprising tradesmen of this locality have the custom of placing their wares for show on the broad space in front of their houses, and emblazoning their names and callings on standards there erected. Now one of these good people — a cunning worker in metals — had caused a huge slipper-bath to be fixed against a tree in front of his house, about ten feet from the ground, possibly for the purpose of advertising the passers-by that he kept such articles for sale or hire. We believe this may be seen at the present hour.

Driven to desperation by circumstances, Mr. Ledbury resolved, as the bath caught his eye, to make it his lodging for the night, to which end it seemed very well adapted. At another time he would have thought himself in the last stage of insanity to have even dreamt of such a proceeding ; but now the plan appeared very feasible, and by no means to be disapproved of. Making a rapid survey up and down the street, to see

that he was unobserved, he took off his rough coat, and pitched it up on to the bath ; and then ascended himself, by means of certain large nails and hooks, which the curious observer may still perceive driven into the trunk of the tree. Having ascertained, to his satisfaction, that the bath would bear his weight, he let himself gently into it ; and, pulling his coat over his shoulders, was in five minutes, perfectly settled and comfortable, delighted at his enterprising spirit, and feeling a thrill of excitement from his novel position.

For a time he employed his mental powers in the contemplation of the heavenly bodies ; and then, his love of harmony once more gaining the ascendant, he indulged in a few snatches of songs, commencing with “ I ’ll watch for thee from my lonely tower,” as the most appropriate. But he had not sung above half a dozen, when a policeman of the N division, parading down High Street in his beat, and holding his lantern successively to the keyholes, as if he expected to find a thief getting through them, was struck by sounds of harmony, proceeding evidently from some elevated situation close at hand. His first impulse was to look up to the houses ; but, as the middle of January is a strange time for people to sing with open windows at three in the morning, he found no solution of the mystery. Then he looked up the trees, and amongst some tubs piled at their feet, but nobody was there ;

and he was giving up the search, and going away, when a sudden burst of melody once more attracted his attention; and, looking round, he perceived, in strong relief against the moon, what eventually turned out to be Mr. Ledbury's conical French hat showing above the rim of the bath, and rocking backwards and forwards in time to the song he was giving forth.

"Halloo there!" shouted the policeman, as he advanced to the foot of the tree. "Who are you?"

Mr. Ledbury's song immediately ceased, and his head peeped over the top of his tin bedroom.

"Come, I'll trouble you to walk a short distance with me," continued 135 N.

"I don't want your company," said Mr. Ledbury, rather haughtily. "I am not in the habit of associating with policemen."

"Now, are you coming?" repeated the policeman, getting impatient.

"No," replied Ledbury, "I am not; and I won't go home till morning, until daylight does appear."

"Where is your home, then?" asked the policeman.

"Mr. Ledbury's, you know: you were at the door last evening. So go away and leave me; for it's my delight of a shiny night, in the sea-





*The London and Westminster Review*

TO THE  
HONORABLE  
MEMBERS OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

son of the year,' to sleep where I choose. It's a wager."

The man immediately recognized his intended prisoner, and seeing it was all right, and that he was not a burglar, directly altered his tone, coming to the conclusion that Mr. Ledbury was a little flighty.

"You must find it very cold, sir," said N ;  
"I think you had better come down."

"Cold !" said Ledbury, still harmonious ;  
"not at all : it's the warmth of its December, and the smiles of its July."

"There's a fire at the station-house," observed the policeman, holding out an inducement for Titus to descend.

"Now, don't worry me, there's a good fellow !" replied Mr. Ledbury. "I'm very well here, and mean to stay. Leave me alone, and call me at seven o'clock, if I am not down."

Seeing that the gentleman was determined, and not exactly making out how he could be got down, if he did not choose to descend himself, the policeman walked away. But he kept watch still over the bath and its contents, returning at short intervals, to see that all was right. At two or three visits Mr. Ledbury was still singing ; but at length he became tired, and, pulling his coat all over the top of the bath, covered himself in, and, it is presumed, went into a doze. And

when the first grey light of morning crept over the district, before the crowd of passengers had commenced, he came cautiously down, and returned to his home. The servants were just up, so that he had no occasion to disturb the household; only telling them not to say anything about his entrance, he walked quietly up to his own room, and, undressing himself, got into bed, —his brain being still a little confused, although he was pleased to see the key of the door on the dressing-table, whence he had forgotten to take it the evening before.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE ENCAMPMENT IN BURNHAM BEECHES.

IF the reader wished us to point out to him one of the loveliest bits of rural scenery in our leafy England, so tranquil and secluded, and yet comparatively so small a distance from an important and bustling highway, that any one wishing to live the life of a convivial anchorite could therein combine his retirement with every novelty or luxury that the great world could offer, we would conduct him into the centre of a finely-wooded district in Buckinghamshire. Its goodly trees may be perceived by the traveller on the Great Western Railway, after he has passed the Slough station, on the headland to the right of the line, between Farnham Common and Dropmore, and it is known as Burnham Beeches.

The tract of land, broken and irregular, is thickly covered with the trees from which it takes its name, presenting some of the finest and most picturesque specimens of forest scenery in the kingdom. Long shady avenues of velvet turf, spangled with daisies, and teeming with quivering

harebells, pierce the green-wood in every direction ; now as small footpaths, climbing up the side, and running along the edge of some forsaken and precipitous gravel-pit ; and now plunging into the depths of the forest, apart from the beaten track, amidst coverts of fern and under-wood, until they widen into fair glades. These are bordered on either side by the gnarled and misshapen bolls of trees, venerable in their garniture of hoary lichen, whose moss-covered and distorted trunks, far above the ground, offer natural and luxurious settles to the visitor, and induce him to rest awhile, as he lingers with a sense of intense pleasure so exquisite that it almost amounts to pain, upon the deep tranquillity and loveliness around him. And many changes have those old trees seen, during the centuries of smiling summers and stern winters that have rolled their sunshine and shadow over their venerable head-tops : they have budded and put on their foliage when the chimes of Burnham Abbey called the villagers to the compline, and the low chaunt of Saxon prayer floated on the breeze towards them ; they will still put forth their verdure when the very recollection of those who now loiter in their shade shall have passed away. The remembrance of the calm seclusion of Burnham Beeches, when once visited, will never be banished from the mind of the traveller ; but come back fresh and green upon his heart,

after many years of worldly toil and harassing existence, and cheer his pilgrimage, by awakening every old and pleasant association connected with the time when all was fair and peaceful as the surrounding prospect.

But at the exact period of our story few of these attributes were visible, for it was towards the end of January; whilst a heavy snow lay upon the ground, and was still falling, from which the huge stems of the trees started up like spectres, black and fantastic from the contrast. Everything was wrapped in the dead silence of the country, broken only by the occasional report of a gun, sharp and clear in the freezing air, which echoed for a few seconds through the woodland, and then died away; or the fall of small heaps of snow, disturbed from their equilibrium by the perching of some intrusive sparrow restless with hunger, and tumbling through the crisp and naked branches of the trees. Even the waggons and horses, with muffled wheels and feet, went noiselessly across the common, pulling up the snow after them, and leaving marks like those we see upon removing the ornaments of a twelfth-cake,—the only evidences of sound which they gave out being the creaking and straining of the wheels as they lumbered over the heavy ground, or the flick of the driver's whip.

Along one of the principal avenues of the beeches, about the middle of the day, any one

who had chosen to take his station there at such an uninviting time, and keep an attentive look-out, might have seen a solitary pedestrian trying to make what way he might towards the centre of the wood. Had he been previously acquainted with the person, he would probably have recognised Spriggy Smithers—the gentleman in ankle-jacks, the acquaintance of Jack Johnson, who, it may be recollected, assisted him in building the temporary supper-room on the morning of the party at Ledbury's. We say, he would, probably, have recognised our friend, because he might have been readily pardoned for not perceiving at first who it really was, Spriggy having swaddled himself up in so many old-worsted-comforters about his neck, and haybands round his feet and legs, as to destroy all leading traces of identity. His toilet was never very carefully made at the best of times; but now it was even more eccentric than ever; and he had mounted an additional ornament, in the shape of a red-cotton handkerchief tied round his hat, over the band,—for what exact purpose it is difficult to determine. An old game-bag, patched and mended with pieces of sacking, carpet, net, and whatever had come uppermost at the time it was required, was slung over his shoulder, offering certain evidence, from its outward appearance, of being well filled; and he carried a long staff in his hand, which had been, without doubt, pulled



from some eligible spray-pile that had fallen in the line of his journey.

It was snowing hard, as we have stated ; and the feathery particles seemed to have combined against Spriggy, and put all their inventive powers to the stretch, that they might render his progress as uncomfortable as possible. They had, evidently, made friends with the wind, who entered into the joke as well, and blew them into his eyes, whenever he opened them wider than usual, or lifted up his face, until they made him wince again. Then they waited for him in sly corners at the tops of avenues, and when he came by they all scuffled out at once, and tumbled and whiffled about his head, the more desperate getting into his ears, and violently rushing down his neck ; but by the time he put up his hand to catch them, they had all vanished away. The idler flakes did not personally insult him, but settled gently upon his hat, as well as the perfect absence of nap would allow them to remain there ; and contented themselves with being carried a little way for nothing, when they quietly disappeared, and were seen no more.

But, in spite of these intrusive annoyances, Spriggy still kept on his journey, occasionally turning off along a by-track, whose situation beneath the deep snow could be ascertained only by some peculiar briar or hornbeam in its vicinity ; all of which were, however, as well known to

him as our various coast landmarks to a channel-pilot. It was heavy walking, to be sure, and there was not a trace left by previous travellers to guide him, for the snow kept falling so thickly that even his own footmarks were soon obliterated, and all was as dazzling and level as before. But he had, as he termed it, put the steam on; which process was accomplished by lighting a short pipe; and, setting the snow at defiance, he crunched his way still deeper into the wood, until a sudden turn round a thicket of holly, yew, and other evergreens, brought him to the end of his walk.

The spot at which he now arrived was situated on the side of a small, but steep declivity; part of which had given way in a landslip, forming the hill, as it were, into two large steps. Upon this platform, and against the embankment above, a large, rude tent, had been constructed of poles and ragged canvass, apparently the remnants of some ancient race-course or fair drinking-booth. Before it the greater part of the snow had been swept away, and two fires lighted, round which a large party of individuals were gathered, more or less disreputable: several having the costume and expression of real gipsies, but the majority evidently belonging to that anomalous class of perambulating manufacturers known as "tramps." A couple of tilted carts with chimneys were stationed near the tent, in one of which a fire was

also burning, and to these were attached bundles of the thick sticks used to throw at snuff-boxes, as well as poles for building stalls; and one of them also carried a light deal table, with three legs, from which an ingenious observer might have inferred that some of the party were versed in the necromantic mysteries of the pea-and-thimble. A pile of fire-wood had been collected, and stacked up close at hand; and lower down the slope, in a decayed cow-shed, two miserable horses and a donkey were mumbling such scanty fodder as their owners could procure for them.

“ Well, my beans,—here we is,” said Spriggy, announcing his own arrival, which was perfectly unnecessary, to judge from the cordial manner in which he was received. “ How ’s the times ?”

“ Brickish,” replied one of the party, showing a small bit of wool to the new comer. “ Cooper took something in that line the night afore last from a farm t’other side the Splash.”

“ Cut up ?” inquired Spriggy.

“ Safe,” replied the man, pointing to the large saucepan which was slung over one of the fires. “ What have you brought ?”

With an air of anticipated triumph, Spriggy unslung the game-bag he was carrying, and, shooting out a quantity of vegetables, at last produced a very fine jack, of some ten or twelve pounds’ weight.

"There's a jockey!" he exclaimed admiringly. "I took a pair of 'em with trimmers in Squire Who-is-it's fleet last night, and sold one to him this morning. Wouldn't the gov'nor swear neither if he know'd it!"

Whereupon, chuckling at his deception, in that hearty spirit ever displayed by the lower orders when they impose upon their superiors, Spriggy was attacked with such a fit of coughing, aggravated by the combined influence of night-air and mountain-dew, that it was found necessary to produce some cordial from a flat stone bottle in possession of one of the party, to bring him round again; and, after a tolerable draught of its contents, poured into a small pipkin without a handle, he felt considerably relieved.

"And now to business," he observed, as soon as he had recovered his breath. "Is the Londoner still here?"

The man nodded his head, and pointed towards the cart.

"He's got into rayther a okkard fix, then," continued Spriggy. "I've walked ten blessed miles this very morning to get him away, for there's no time to be lost."

"Are the beaks fly?" asked the man.

"Downy as goslings," returned Smithers. "They're coming here all in a lump, you may depend upon it, and won't do you much good if you ain't careful. How about that mutton?"

“All right,” replied the tramp. “The snow hides it, and it will keep for ever if the frost lasts. But look sharp, if the young un is to be got off; for them rails is terrible things for quick journeys.”

Following his advice, Spriggy went towards the cart, from whose chimney the smoke was ascending, and knocked at the door, which was fastened on the inner side. It was opened by Edward Morris,—the cousin to whom Jack Johnson had paid the visit in St. Giles’s, the night of his arrival in London. We have learned already that he had left the cellar; and he had now joined the present party, with one or two of whom he became acquainted in his late domicile, in the hope of remaining safely in the refuge which their encampment offered, from the vigilance of the London police.

One of those delusive changes—the occasional supposed ameliorations which form, to the professional eye, the most distressing evidence of confirmed pthisis—had somewhat improved his appearance since the interview in St. Giles’s. But his eye was brighter, his lips more vividly tinted, and the same self-satisfied conviction that he was quickly recovering from his “slight cough,” only went to prove how the blighting canker was still rapidly, though silently, at work within. As Smithers informed him in a few words that his retreat was suspected, he betrayed some slight emotion;

but immediately afterwards assumed his customary indifference as he calmly inquired of his visitor what course was best to pursue.

“I reckon you are not much of a hand at walking now you are bad?” said Spriggy; “and yet, there are four or five miles of snow to be trudged through this afternoon, if you wish to get away!”

“Why should I not walk?” asked Morris, hastily. “I am strong enough now to go any distance.”

“I only want you to go as far as Eton Brocas,” returned Spriggy. “I’ve got a skiff lying there that will soon take us to my place at Penton Hook. The river ’s as full as a tick, and will carry us down in no time of itself; but we haven’t a minute to lose.”

“I will be with you directly,” said Morris; “as soon as I have collected these few things. Tell them to keep awake, in case of any pursuit; and, of course, not to know anything about it. Do you hear?”

“All right!” replied Smithers, clapping his hand against his open mouth, intending to intimate by the pantomime that they would be silent.

Then, going back to his friends, he made a hasty, but very satisfactory meal, whilst Morris was preparing for his departure. The whole business, rapidly transacted as it had been, scarcely seemed to disturb the economy of the camp in the

slightest degree. Possibly they were accustomed to such scenes, for they took no notice of what was going on, although by this time all of them were perfectly aware of the circumstances; their only care being, apparently, directed to putting their social establishment in order, and disposing of such objects as might give rise to any unpleasant arguments with the expected police as to right of possession, or lawful acquisition; and, when this was done, they set to work in their tent, making clothes'-pegs and door-mats, with an alacrity that would have led any one to believe he was visiting a most industrious community of hard-working individuals.

In a quarter of an hour from the commencement of this hurried interview all was arranged, and Spriggy, re-lighting his pipe, led the way, having put the parcel of the other into his empty game-bag, followed by Morris, to whom he had given his staff as an assistance. The gipsies watched their forms until they were lost in the copse of evergreens, and then resumed their wonted occupations.

## CHAPTER XX.

THE FLIGHT OF JOHNSON AND MORRIS AT SAVORY'S WEIR.

THE policeman for whom Jack Johnson had promised to procure the out-patient's ticket to the hospital, presented himself at that gentleman's lodgings the next morning, some little time before the appointed hour. He apologised for so doing by informing Jack that he had received orders, in company with others of the force, to proceed that very day to the country, in pursuit of a young man charged with felony, who was supposed to be concealed in the neighbourhood. It is needless to state that Johnson's suspicions were immediately aroused as to the object of the search; but, assuming an indifference as well as he was able, he contrived not only to learn that it was indeed Morris they were in search of, but also to worm out a description of the locality in which they expected to find him.

Informed of the danger that threatened his cousin by this singular chance, as soon as the officer had departed he began to consider by what means it was possible to avert the impending



evil ; and, after half an hour of anxious thought, he determined upon leaving town without delay, and endeavouring to give Morris timely notice of the pursuit by arriving at the Beeches before the police, should he be fortunate enough to get the start of them. He therefore lost no time in proceeding to the railway, but had the mortification of finding that one of the trains had left scarcely a minute before he arrived at the terminus, involving a delay of two hours : and, to add to his dismay, he learnt from one of the guards, after a few indirect inquiries, that several police-officers were included amongst the passengers. Under the present circumstances this was most unfortunate, as there was no resource left except to wait until the next departure. At length, after two hours—which appeared multiplied into half-a-dozen—of harassing suspense, Johnson took his seat in the train, and set off, as fast as steam could take him, for the Slough station.

There was yet some little daylight before him when he arrived at the end of his journey ; and the fall of snow had ceased for a time, although the sky still looked threatening. He immediately went to the hotel, and procured a horse, thinking that he should travel quicker by that means ; at the same time he was anxious not to be embarrassed by the company of another person. Whilst the animal was being saddled he got all the information he wished respecting his route to the

Beeches from the ostler ; and also found out that the officers had not long departed, having waited some time at the inn "to keep out the cold." This information induced him to use more haste ; so that, in three-quarters of an hour from his leaving Paddington he was riding in the direction of Farnham Common, across the uplands, as fast as the state of the roads would permit.

As he arrived at the less-frequented lanes and bridle-paths, he plainly made out the traces of the party who had preceded him, as well as some prints of horse-shoes, from which he conceived that they had procured the assistance of the local horse-patrol as guides. He inquired of every person he met how long the police had passed, and from every one received the reply, that they were about twenty minutes a-head of him ; but were not using very great speed, in consequence of one or two of them being upon foot. There was but a slender chance, he knew, of reaching Morris before them ; more especially as they were in advance : but still, the chance was worth pushing for, and he determined at all hazards to ride on at a quickened pace, and pass the officers as a casual traveller. He therefore took advantage of a favourable piece of road to increase his speed, and soon reached the borders of the common at a sharp trot.

A shepherd was standing, with his dog, at the gate of a field which he now came to, and he

pulled up for a minute to ask which road he should take; for several thoroughfares crossed one another at this point, and the footmarks were lost amidst many others.

“Are you along of them patrols?” asked the rustic.

Johnson hesitated for an instant; and then thought it best to answer in the affirmative.

“I seed them go up the hill, nigh half an hour back,” continued the rustic; “they ’re after a poacher in the Shaw—ain’t ’em!”

“Yes, yes!” answered Johnson impatiently, “I think they are; but, which is the nearest way?”

“Why, if you likes to come over this field,” said the man, “and through that gap at the end, you ’ll cut off two mile or more.”

“That will do!” cried Johnson; “and there’s a shilling for you!”

“Thank ye, sir!” answered the man, touching his hat, and apparently overcome by the munificence of the present. “You ’ll just put up the hurdle again when you ’ve got through.”

“All right!” exclaimed the other; and, setting off again, he was soon at the end of the field.

Skirting the copse all the way, he passed through the gap, as directed; and then, crossing another long meadow, he pushed down the hurdles, without caring to replace them, and entered

one of the avenues of the Beeches. Fortunately, whilst he was deliberating which direction to proceed in, an urchin came up, with a bundle of dry brushwood ; and, finding that he was going to the very spot, forming in himself a small member of the gipsy community, Johnson stimulated him to a little increased action by the promise of a few pence ; and, starting the boy to run before him, he followed as closely as he could, without riding him down. They traversed several thickets, in some of which the branches hung so low that Johnson was compelled to stoop completely forward, until his head touched the horse's neck. At length, to his inexpressible joy, he saw the fire of the encampment shining through the trees of the Shaw in intermitting flashes.

The whole party of gipsies, and their associates, were apparently in great confusion when Johnson arrived ; and one or two approached him, when they saw that he was alone, with countenances expressive of anything but courtesy or polite reception. But, luckily, the man who had conversed with Spriggy Smithers in the morning was amongst them, and he directly recognised Johnson as a friend of Morris, having been in the St. Giles's cellar on the evening when the former called. He immediately explained to him what had occurred, producing no little alarm in our hero's mind when he told him that he was too late after all, for that the police

had been there already ; in fact, it was singular enough he did not meet them, as they had not left above ten minutes.

“ And what has become of Morris ? ” inquired Johnson anxiously.

“ Of the young man ? ” replied the other. “ Oh ! he ’s all safe at present with Smithers ; but I don’t know how long he ’ll be so.”

The tramp here informed Johnson of his cousin’s having left them with Spriggy in the morning ; but added, that the police had gained intelligence of his flight, by some extraordinary means or another ; for that, upon failing to discover their expected prisoner in the Shaw, he had heard them express their intention of going directly to Penton Hook, where Smithers resided.

“ They ’re uncommon crafty birds, them police,” he concluded. “ I think they ’d find a man in the middle of a hay-stack, when he wasn’t there even.”

“ Would there be a chance of passing them ? ” asked Johnson.

“ Like enough, like enough,” returned the man. “ It’s nine miles if it’s an inch ; and they are sure to have a drain or two upon the journey.”

“ There is a hope yet, then,” thought Jack ; and, bestowing another trifling gratuity upon the man for his information, he turned his horse’s

head, and once more started upon his enterprise.

The wind howled mournfully through the naked branches of the copse, whilst the day was rapidly declining, as he quitted the Beeches, and gazed upon the dreary expanse of country before him which he had to traverse, in its one unbroken cloak of snow, now darkening in the cold wintry twilight. Large flakes, the indications of an approaching heavy fall, began to descend, and the drifts were in many spots so high that the boundary of the road was scarcely perceptible. But, under the excitement of the position, Johnson urged his horse along a narrow lane, which had apparently remained undisturbed since the first fall, and, by dint of caution, and no small degree of courage,—for the snow in some places reached to his stirrups,—he passed the more exposed portion of the country, and arrived at the comparatively low grounds below East Burnham, where the road was somewhat clearer, and allowed him to progress for a trifling distance with tolerable speed. But this was of short duration; the drifts had again collected from the uplands, and when he reached the line of the railroad, which crossed the lane, he found the archway completely filled up with snow. This presented, at first sight, an insurmountable obstacle to any further advance. It was impossible to cross the line, or he would immediately have done so; for the

embankment directly beyond the ox-rails that bounded it, rising up like a wall, precluded the possibility of clearing them by a leap; nor, indeed, would it have been practicable on level ground, from the quantity of snow on either side. There was but one chance left, and that was to ride right through it, trusting to its being a mere curtain. But the horse refused to charge it, as if it had been a solid mass, and turned sharp round each time Johnson approached it. At length he hit upon a new plan. Without descending from the saddle, he took out his handkerchief and tied it as a bandage over the animal's eyes; then, applying the whip pretty vigorously, urged him forward against it. The whole body of snow immediately crumbled down about him, and the horse, alarmed at the falling mass, made a violent plunge forward, which nearly threw Johnson from the saddle, but sufficed at the same time to clear the archway. The road to the leeward of the embankment was tolerably practicable; and, taking the handkerchief from the head of the horse, who was snorting and quivering with fright, he rode on with little delay through Slough, and along the turnpike road to Eton.

As he reached Windsor bridge, and halted at the gate, he was much gratified to learn from the toll-keeper that the officers had not yet passed, and the lamps and animation of the town, as he

slowly rode through its streets, somewhat reassured him; but, when he had passed it, the darkness seemed more apparent from the lights which he had quitted. Still he kept on his way, stopping only for ten minutes at the "Bells of Ouseley," to take some hurried refreshment, before he crossed Runnymede.

The distant bell of Egham church tolled the hour of six as he arrived at this extended waste, and it was now quite dark, scarcely a star appearing in the black sky. The river, too, had in some places overflowed the road, rendering the greatest caution necessary to distinguish between its depths and the firm ground, whilst the collected snow began to ball in the horse's feet; rendering every step precarious. There was no alternative for Johnson but to get down, and walk at the head; and this he did with much difficulty and exertion, until he reached the causeway on the high road. Here there was very little snow, the sharp wind having carried it all away into the hollows as it fell; so, clearing out the shoes of his horse, he once more mounted, and the animal's hoofs rang sharply over the frozen ground towards Staines Bridge, the gas-lamps on which could now be seen about a mile off. After several inquiries, he learned the situation of Smithers' house;—indeed he could not well miss it, for they told him there was no other dwelling upon the road for two miles; and,



turning off from the great road, at the foot of the bridge, he traversed another rough piece of country, and in twenty minutes more was shouting for entrance at the gate of Spriggy's almost amphibious habitation on the banks of the Thames.

After some little delay, the owner of the mansion made his appearance at the door, where he remained, imagining that the noise proceeded from some traveller who had lost his way—interruptions of this kind, on such an out-of-the-way road, being by no means unusual. But, as soon as he recognised Johnson's voice, he bustled forward, and assisted him to dismount, leading the horse round to a small shed at the side of the house: and then, with a few expressions of surprise at his unexpected appearance, ushered him into the interior of the cottage. Morris was smoking at the fireside, but he started up, as if alarmed, when Johnson entered; and, shading the light of the solitary candle from his eyes, gazed anxiously towards the door.

"Jack! is it only you?" he exclaimed, as soon as he knew it was his cousin. "Who would have dreamt of seeing you here at this time of night? I declare I thought it was the police."

And, with an attempt to force a laugh of indifference, he resumed his place on the settle of the hearth.

"Is this all you have to say to me, Morris?"

returned Johnson, as he approached the fireplace. "I am sorry you do not think me worth a better welcome."

"Oh!—well, then, how d'ye do?—if that's it," replied the other carelessly, holding out his hand. "I am better, you see; my cold is quite gone; I told you that it was nothing. But what brings you here?"

"The police are after you; they have discovered your retreat."

"I know it," returned Morris; "but we have given them the slip, after all."

"You are deceived," returned Johnson, with an earnestness that checked his cousin's derisive laugh. "They are now in pursuit of you, and a few minutes may bring them to the gate."

"Oh! you must be mistaken. How could they have found out where I had gone to?"

"I know not; it suffices that they have done so, and are close upon my track."

As he spoke, a short, expressive whistle from Spriggy, who was stationed at the window, attracted their attention.

"Look!" he exclaimed, "if there isn't the bull's-eye lanterns coming down the lane, may I never set a night-line again. Up with the dead-lights until we see what stuff they are made on!"

He closed up the window-shutter as he concluded this sentence, and a few seconds passed of anxious silence, so perfect, that nothing disturbed

it but the quick, fevered respiration of Morris, which was painfully audible. Johnson held his breath, and compressed his lips between his teeth, until he had nearly bitten them through ; whilst Smithers rapidly threw some water on the wood embers in the fire-place, extinguished the candle, and took up his position of sentinel at the door, having put up the bar, assuming an attitude of earnest watchfulness.

“ Hush !” exclaimed the fisherman, after a short pause ; “ it’s them sure enough ! Ah ! werry good !—werry good !” he continued, as the party were heard calling out from the lane ; “ you must wait a bit ! we ’re all gone to bed, and asleep.”

“ We are taken !” cried Morris, in accents of distress, now losing all his fortitude. “ What can be done ?”

“ Get down to the river as fast as you can, by the back-door,” answered Spriggy. “ You ’ll find the punt lying there ; and I ’ll keep ’em all right for five minutes ; but you must lose no time.”

Quickly collecting their outer articles of dress, they prepared to follow his advice. Johnson gave a few brief directions to Smithers respecting the horse ; and then, catching up the lantern, which Spriggy had left on the floor, folded his coat round it to conceal the light, and hurried towards the Thames in company with his cousin. The punt was moored there, hauled a little way up

the bank. Morris directly entered, and took his seat at the end, whilst Johnson pulled up the iron-spike that fastened the boat by a chain to the land ; and, pushing it off with all the force he could collect, jumped on to it as it floated in the deep water.

The river, swollen with the floods, was rapid and powerful ; and directly bore the punt away from the shore, whirling it round with ungovernable force in the eddies, and then bearing it at a fearful rate down the stream. But they had scarcely started when Johnson, to his horror, found that in their hurried departure they had forgotten to bring anything with them to guide it, and were, consequently, entirely at the mercy of the angry waters. In vain he endeavoured to arrest its progress with a few slight rods, pertaining to some fishing apparatus, that were lying in the boat ; they snapped off like reeds. In vain he caught at the large rushes that danced and coquetted with the stream, as the punt occasionally neared the side of the river. They eluded his grasp, or were torn away from their stems as if they were pieces of thread. On, on went the boat in its headlong career ; the rapidly-passing outlines of the bare and ghastly pollards on the river's bank proving how swift was their progress. And now, for the first time, they heard a deep and continued roar, which increased each moment, as if they were quickly approaching its source. Nei-

ther could offer an explanation of the noise ; and they remained in painful anxiety for some seconds, until Johnson, who was endeavouring to peer through the darkness, cried out,

“ I can see the barge-piles of the lock ! We shall be carried down the weir ! ”

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE NIGHT ON THE AIT.

THOSE acquainted with the course of the Thames from London to Windsor, may remember that Penton Hook is a piece of land between Staines and Laleham, which turns the river into a narrow and sudden curve, cut off from the shore by the lock ; whilst the main body of water flows round it with brawling rapidity on a sharp descent, forming a natural weir. Some strong piles are fixed at the head of the rapid, to keep the large craft from being drawn into the current, and, about half way round the Hook, it gives off a small stream, called the Abbey river, which formerly washed the foundations of Chertsey monastery, one of the most powerful mitred religious houses of its time.

The worn-out boat, carrying the two fugitives, was now being drifted by the turbulent river towards this point ; and the roar of the water, as it dashed between the head-piles of the lock, became fearfully louder and louder. Johnson kept at the head of the boat, or rather at whichever part

of it went first, as it was whirled about in the eddies, and attempted to throw a little more light around them from the miserable candle in the old lantern they had brought with them. And Morris, anticipating the swamping of the punt, which appeared inevitable, had risen from his seat; and, having thrown off his cloak, prepared to reach the land as he best might, when the catastrophe should arrive. Sometimes the boat neared the shore so closely that its edge grated against the rough stones of the embankment; but, before either of them could hold on, it had turned round again, and was once more in the middle of the deep and rapid channel.

Johnson had plainly discerned the dark forms of the head-piles stretching across the river, towards which they were now hurrying, and in another instant the punt was borne against the foremost one with a violent shock, that threw them both from their feet, and partly stove in the side, at the same time knocking down the lantern, and extinguishing the light; but they immediately recovered their position, and endeavoured to cling to the iron-work of the standards, and arrest the progress of the boat. The power of the water was, however, too much for them; and, turning round the side of the piles, the punt rushed with fearful violence down the fall, and into the centre of the rapids below the weir, the water pouring in everywhere through the crevices

of its battered sides. Swift as had been their passage before, it was now increased tenfold, as they grated successively over the stones of the shallows, or glided swiftly onward in the deep water, amidst the masses of ice which were floating everywhere on the surface of the current.

The country on either side was now more open, and the refraction of light from the snow on the banks enabled them to perceive objects somewhat more clearly than before. They were quickly approaching the entrance of the Abbey river, the position of which was marked by a few leafless shrubs on a small island, or ait, at the spot where the stream divided.

“It will be the turn of a straw as to which course the punt takes,” said Johnson, hurriedly. “If she goes into the narrow river, we are all right; for she will run her head into the bank immediately.”

“She is half filled with water,” replied Morris, who had retired to the other side of the well; “a minute more will settle it either way.”

The boat appeared to approach the ait, now plainly visible on the dark water, in such a direct line, that it was impossible to tell in which course they would be carried. In another instant it touched the side, and was for the moment fixed there, as if balancing which current to fall into. Taking advantage of the check, Johnson leant forwards, and seizing the branch of a willow that



grew upon its edge, pulled the head of the boat to land, before it swung round either way. Then, jumping on to the ait, which was not above ten or twelve feet across, he dragged the punt still further on the dry ground, and called upon Morris to join him, first taking care to secure their craft, by winding the chain round the stem of the willow.

“ Well, we may thank our stars that one risk is past ! ” said Jack, as his cousin landed.

“ We have escaped drowning to perish with cold,” replied Morris, in his customary unconcerned tone, now that the excitement of the danger was over. “ Are we to remain all night on this wretched place ? ”

“ If you can suggest any plan to get away, I shall be most happy to try it,” returned Johnson. “ It is not a spot, I grant, that any one would pick out for a gipsying party in the middle of January ; still we have had a lucky escape.”

For a few minutes they both remained silent, nothing being heard but the chafing of the river, as it rushed past the ait, and the angry wind, howling in dreary cadences over the surrounding wastes. Johnson felt for a short time slightly annoyed at the little gratitude his cousin evinced, after all his exertions to save him from the fate that threatened ; and Morris was literally too exhausted to talk, but, wrapping his cloak closely about him, he leant, gasping for breath, and shi-

vering with cold, against the trunk of the willow. But Jack's kindness of heart was ever uppermost; and knowing the state of his cousin's health, as well as being aware that he must be suffering acutely from the exposure, his feeling towards him was far more of sympathy than anger.

"You had better move about, Morris, if you are able," said Johnson, speaking first, and in the most conciliating manner.

"It is dreadfully cold!" returned the other faintly, as he endeavoured to stamp his feet upon the ground; "I have scarcely any feeling left."

"Wait a while," cried Jack, as if struck with some bright idea; "we will get a light, and see if there is any way of improving our present condition. It might be better, certainly, and it cannot be much worse."

"How can you procure a light? The lantern is half filled with water—it is impossible!"

"Devil a bit," answered Jack. "Tallow don't soak up much, and we can wipe the candle dry. Where is it?"

The lantern had rolled to the extreme end of the punt; but Johnson recovered it, and, throwing out the water, he procured a light from a box of cigar *allumettes* that he always carried with him. There was a little obstinacy and sputtering on the part of the wick at first, but at length it burned brightly; and then Johnson hung the lantern on one of the short branches

of the tree, whence it threw its rays over the ait, like a beacon in the dreary solitude.

“There is a bottle of spirits in my pocket,” said Morris, “if you can unbutton my coat; my hands are too cold.”

“Come, come,” returned Johnson cheerfully, “we shall do very well now. I begin to think, after all, the life of Robinson Crusoe is not the tremendous lie I always imagined it to be. We will have a fire directly.”

“Our position, to be sure, might have been worse,” said Morris, with more than ordinary suavity, somewhat softened by Jack’s evident attempt to comfort him.

“Worse! I believe you,” replied Jack. “You had your choice of two alternatives: to be with the police, or at the bottom of the icy river. Look at that bright star!—mind how slyly he winks at us for having jockeyed them both. Now, see what I’m going to do.”

To collect every particle of fishing apparatus that was made of wood from the punt was to Johnson the work of half a minute, and these he mercilessly split, and then cut into small pieces. Next, clearing some of the snow from the ground, he laid the foundation of the fire, which he contrived to kindle with various play-bills and odd leaves of periodicals from the depths of the pockets pertaining to his wrapper, finally, using the lining of his hat for the same purpose.

The flame crept from one piece to another, driving out the angry and hissing sap, until the whole was in a blaze ; and then Morris bent down before it, and endeavoured to draw fresh energy from the warmth."

"Now, take some brandy," said Jack, "and make yourself comfortable ; you will soon be all right. For my part, I shall try a few gymnastics."

And he began violently to belabour himself with both arms, after the manner of cabmen of languid circulation in the extremities, who have been unemployed for four hours on a frosty night ; until he was quite red in the face, and breathless with exertion.

"But what shall we do when the fire goes out ?" asked his cousin.

"We won't let it go out," replied Jack ; "we will burn the old boat first. The outside of the wood is wet, to be sure ; but it is covered with pitch, and will soon catch."

"The wind still cuts terribly," said Morris, as he crept closer to the fire. "I wish we could get some shelter from it."

"I wish we could," said Jack ; "but I don't know what to say to it. The wind is not like the cold. The cold is a low, pitiful sneak, who can't stand fire at all, and whom you may always drive away if you please ; but the wind is rather

a queer customer to deal with. Ah! bellows away," he continued, as a blast of more than ordinary force rushed through the trees, and across the ait, whirling some of the incandescent embers into the water; "I don't mind you a bit, as far as myself goes."

Whether or no the wind heard this defiance, and felt affronted at it, we cannot say; but certainly it was lulled all of a sudden, as if it had expended its power; and the fire, which had just before stood a chance of being carried away into the river altogether, now burnt up again steadily, and much brighter from the draught."

"What a merry fellow that star is!" resumed Johnson, looking at the clear frosty sky, in which the constellations were beginning to appear, "and how he still keeps winking through it all! I wonder who he is?"

"I can't inform you," returned Morris vacantly. "I was thinking of something else at the minute."

"Well, don't think of something else, then," returned Johnson, who kept talking upon whatever idea came first, to keep up his cousin's spirits, as well as his own. "Look at the stars, and think of them—you cannot help doing so, if you watch them."

"I have both thought about and watched them enough, since I left London," returned his cou-

sin, "and often traced out some particular one, that I imagined had some connexion with my own being."

As he spoke, the star to which Johnson had alluded shot half way across the sky, and then disappeared.

"Well, that's a jump, however!" said Jack. "If stars are worlds, how awfully those shots must astonish the inhabitants! I wonder what that means?"

"My fate," replied Morris. "I shall fall as that star has fallen, and then all will be darkness and oblivion!"

"Nonsense!" said Jack. "Have a pipe."

Again diving into the secret recesses of his *paletot*, Johnson produced a tin tobacco-box, which, as he offered it to his cousin, afforded him a fresh subject for much interesting conversation, as to how he had knocked it off the middle stick at Moulsey races, in company with a pincushion, seven apples inside one another, a snake, a pear full of tea-things, and a japan box containing dirt, with a sovereign soldered on to the lid; with a passing allusion to the two-bladed cast-iron knife which fell in the hole, in return for which the two next sticks hit the man's head and shins by accident. Next he procured some more fuel from the punt, and heaped it on to the fire; and, finally, clearing away the snow, with the assistance of a landing-net, lay down as close to the

blaze as was convenient, and began to smoke, in company with his cousin.

An hour or two passed on, the progress of time being marked by the bell of Laleham church, which sounded clearly through the silent night, followed by the chimes from the other villages, more or less distinct, in proportion to their distance. It was now midnight, and the wind had abated; whilst the moon, at present in her first quarter, had risen, and was throwing her cold faint light over the glistening river, and the desolate tracts of ground on either side. The fire had diminished into a heap of glowing embers; and Johnson, still reclining at its side, with his back against the tree, wearied by his exertions, and drowsy from the cold, had allowed himself to fall into a fitful doze, although his last speech had been a caution to Morris not to give way to the slightest feeling of drowsiness. From this troubled slumber he was, however, aroused by his cousin, who seized him suddenly by the arm, and, shaking him with nervous trepidation, uttered, in a low, alarmed voice,

“Jack! see! there is something moving on the bank of the river! What can it be?”

Rubbing his eyes, and hurriedly collecting his ideas, Johnson looked in the direction pointed out by his cousin. He could plainly perceive the outline of a human figure moving apparently between the bank and the water, not as if it were

walking, but with an uniform gliding progress. Presently it left the shore, and advanced slowly into the stream of the smaller river, and, when it had reached the centre, it bent forward, as if gazing intently upon the deep gurgling waters.

“Heavens and earth!” muttered Johnson, scarcely breathing, “what is this?”

“It is an apparition!” whispered Morris, clutching Johnson’s arm in an agony of terror, until his nails nearly penetrated the flesh.

“I never believed in ghosts,” returned Johnson; “but this looks more like one than anything I ever imagined. Hist! see what it is about.”

The figure still bending towards the river, extended its arms, and apparently drew from the depths a dark form, bearing the indistinct outline of a human body. This it regarded for some seconds with fixed attention, and then moved again on the surface of the current, in the direction of the ait, dragging the other object after it.

“It is coming upon us!” cried Morris, as the dark outline approached nearer and nearer. “Jack! save me!” he continued, in an extremity of fear, as he sank down behind his cousin. “I cannot bear to look at it!”

“It’s all as right as twenty trivets, my young swan-hoppers!” exclaimed a voice, which Johnson immediately recognised as belonging to Spriggy Smithers, who directly afterwards jumped ashore.



from a very unsafe water-conveyance, bearing some resemblance to a square washing-tub.

"Smithers!" cried both of the cousins in amazement.

"The werry identical," replied their acquaintance; "who else did you suppose it was?"

A few words explained everything. Spriggy's "pardner,"—an important personage in all rural firms for the propagation of poaching—having some business to transact in the Abbey river, with respect to certain night-lines, had observed the fire on the ait, and communicated the result of his survey to his friend upon reaching his house. Smithers had immediately started off in a light boat of his own construction, used for crossing flooded meadows in wild-duck shooting; and following the course of various overflowed bournes and water-dykes, had reached the main river by a cutting nearly opposite the islet.

"I expected you had got into some mischief," observed Spriggy, "when I found as you had not taken the punt-pole. It's lucky you landed as you have done."

"I don't think the punt will be of much use again," said Johnson; "but we will make it all square with you."

"And the police?" asked Morris; "where are they?"

"All gone," replied Spriggy. "I swore I'd

seen nothing, and know'd nobody noways ; so you can come back again in safety to my place for to-night ; but I can only put you over one at a time."

" But what did you drag out of the river half way across?" inquired Johnson.

" Something for supper," replied Spriggy. A wicker-wheel chuck full of eels."

Carefully entering the frail conveyance, Morris was ferried over the river, and then left, in company with the eel-trap, which had caused them so much alarm, whilst Smithers returned for Johnson. The small punt was then concealed in an adjacent ditch ; and, under the guidance of their friend, the two fugitives returned to his cottage across the fields, where they rested the remainder of the night. Early the next morning they separated, Johnson returning to Slough with the horse, and Morris going he scarcely knew whither—but in the direction of London—where he felt, after all, the greatest security was to be found.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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